Post-Industrial Society (II) *Joseph Featherstone*

# THE NEW REPUBLIC

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## Détente and Dissent

*Moscow Turns the Screw*
*Anthony Astrachan*

**The Future of Watergate**—*The Editors*

**Back to Work**—*John Osborne*

**Secretary Kissinger**—*Stanley Karnow*

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# TRB

from Washington ®
September 22, 1973

## Conservative Chic

I was lucky, in a six weeks' absence from Washington my standard lunch (liverwurst sandwich, milkshake and cookies) went up only five cents, to $1.30. But the inflationary wave hasn't crested yet. Did you realize, for example, that along Route 17 in New York, nightcrawlers and blood worms are three cents each? Yes sir, they used to be two cents. That's a 33 percent jump and I am going to call up the federal price control agency and whisper it to them—from a pay phone.

Vacation is over and on my file cabinet sit 446 pages of advance page proofs of the Brookings volume, *Setting National Priorities: The 1974 Budget* (paperback, $3.95). It warns, "Not for quotation before July 19, 1973." I took it with me but the Haldeman-Ehrlichman show was too much; I only reached page 290.

Some of the mad plumbers in the Nixon White House proposed firebombing Brookings. Maybe they were less mad than they seemed. They knew that the seemingly innocent (and dreadfully dull) understatements of spectacled scholars may burn down cities. Here, for example, in the Brookings survey are figures that might excite revolution if anybody reads them. Few will.

The figures tend to illustrate, I think, the two-headed nature of the Nixon phenomenon. One is the bizarre grasp for power. The other is his conservative ideology. Mr. Nixon is one of America's few presidential conservative activists.

The grasp for power, of course, is the dramatic aspect. Here is a man who countenanced a White House gestapo, who waged war in defiance of Congress, who asserted the monarchical right of impoundment and executive privilege, who surreptitiously taped all visitors to his Oval Office, who set up assorted hideaway "White Houses" guarded by the Secret Service, who manifested his will through zealots like Haldeman and Ehrlichman, and who apparently condoned the wiretapping of his own brother.

This grasp for power is the aspect that has all the drama and excitement; everywhere you look somebody is now being indicted: a couple of ex-Cabinet members on trial in New York, four former staff members in California. It's impossible to keep track of all the grand juries. Poor old Agnew, he didn't get into the main act and has had to put on a sideshow.

And meanwhile there seems to be no limit to the effrontery of it all: John Connally, for example, making a bid for GOP presidential successor, told the press last week that the President might be justified in ignoring the Supreme Court on giving up the tapes. "There are times when the President of the United States would be right in not obeying a decision of the Supreme Court," he reportedly said. That way impeachment lies.

The second aspect of the Nixon phenomenon is more subtle, more debatable, more difficult. Mr. Nixon is a conservative activist. He is the apostle of the conservative chic. He is as much an ideologue on the conservative side as Harry Hopkins was under FDR on the liberal side. A more pretentious name for it is "neo-social Darwinism," articulated around 1923 by Yale professor William Graham Sumner, who discovered the "forgotten man" and who argued that the poor are an inferior species that can't survive. Groaning at the costs of social welfare Sumner wrote, "Let every man be sober, industrious, prudent and wise, and bring up his children to be so likewise, and poverty will be abolished in a few generations."

Simple, eh? That's the philosophy of our Richard.

You can see how it works in some of those Brookings studies. They offer the standard figures of disparity of wealth in America, that the "lowest fifth" of the families get 5.5 percent of national income and the top fifth a whopping 41.6 percent. "Percentages," it says, "have remained virtually unchanged since World War II."

But it goes on from there to comment that many Americans who consider themselves members of "average, middle-income families," actually belong to the upper-income groups. Few middle-class Americans probably really know how many poor people there are. The present taxes, the figures show, help to keep it that way. Here's the gist of the quiet Brookings summary of federal taxes: "Taxes on the poor are heavy, and the tax system as a whole does little to alter the very unequal distribution of before-tax income." It is true, it continues, that the US graduated income tax "is moderately progressive and largely exempts the poor." That helps in the Darwinian struggle. But, says the report, "this progressivity is offset by the effect of the payroll tax, which accounts for 30 percent of federal revenue and falls heavily on the poor."

Yes sir, payroll taxes and the like mean that "over the last few years the federal tax structure has become more regressive. Reliance on the payroll tax has *increased* from 16 percent of total revenue in fiscal 1960 to 30 percent in 1974, while the importance of the corporation income tax has *declined* from 23 percent of federal revenues in 1960 to 14 percent in 1974." (My italics.)

So there you have it. Under recent tax changes accentuated by Mr. Nixon, the poor are paying higher taxes and the corporations less. The President sees little wrong with that; it is part of the conservative chic. By whatever name, the widespread feeling in 1972 that social reforms had gone about as far as they should go gave the President his big landslide.

Maldistribution of purchasing power ultimately brings penalties. The President's economic record really is terrible: two devaluations, inflation, extortionate interest rates, the great wheat giveaway, and now maybe a recession ahead. Mr. Nixon plaintively says his economic advisers didn't forecast things very well. They evidently are to blame; it sounds like Watergate.

Inflation, of course, is a form of taxation. The President saw the political advantage of tax cuts and insisted on them (eagerly supported by Congress) in 1969 and 1971. Result: the Treasury is today annually $25 billion poorer.

Tax cuts fueled a boom that helped the President win in 1972. He hoped to balance lost taxes by cutting back social programs (not, of course, Defense spending.) The deficits helped produce inflation. Poor old Arthur Burns of the Fed is still imploring Mr. Nixon for higher taxes—even now, he says, it might not be too late. Who knows?

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# The Future Of Watergate

Long, long ago, last May, on the opening day of the Senate Watergate hearings, Chairman Sam Ervin noted "a mood of incredulity" in the country. He thought it was "the constitutional duty of this committee to act to allay the fears being expressed by the citizenry and to establish the factual bases upon which these fears have been founded. . . . The American people are looking to this committee, as the representative of all the Congress, for enlightenment and guidance regarding the details of the allegations regarding the subversion of our electoral processes. The aim of the committee is to provide full and open public testimony in order that the nation can proceed toward the healing of the wounds that now afflict the body politic." That was true and is true. After two and one-half months of televised interrogations the "mood of incredulity" is still present. The "enlightenment and guidance" is not. The first phase of the hearings ended in contradictions, confusion and unseemly haste. The members of the committee were exhausted last August when they adjourned in disarray, embittered in part by the indecencies they had uncovered and reluctant to incur the pain of further "full and open testimony."

Perhaps the committee had not anticipated the force of the counterattack against it, begun by the President and his supporters during the August adjournment. Somehow the truth-seekers began to feel that they, not the wrongdoers, were being asked to account for themselves. It was said to be the committee's fault that high personages had condoned reprehensible acts, and it began to be suggested that senators ought not to be spreading the bad news but ought instead to join the President's men in burying it. This counterattack reached its high point when the President, whose conduct in office was itself a matter for investigation, went to the people via carefully prepared speeches and press conferences to say that Watergate and related atrocities should be left to the courts—up to a point. What that point is has been left purposely vague, but Mr. Nixon and his lawyers let it be known that the Executive would abide only by a "definitive" court decision. Nor has the President's counterattack stopped with claims of executive privilege. He has insisted that the country's ills—inflation, food shortages, even the energy crisis—are somehow linked to the Ervin inquiry and would be more amenable to cure if the lights

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were turned out in the committee room.

And how have the politicians responded? For the most part, they have uncharacteristically kept their mouths shut in public. A Republican member of the Ervin committee some weeks ago privately warned his colleagues that the hearings were a beast that might turn and bite the committee members themselves. The committee's investigative staff has floundered; its presentation to the court seeking the White House tape recordings came late and was delayed even further by pleadings from the President's lawyers.

So when the Ervin committee reconvened last week, it was not surprising that its first decision was to cut down on the hearings schedule and wind up everything but the final report by November 1. Even on a shortened schedule the committee's examination of such matters as the ITT contribution to the proposed San Diego convention of the Republican Party in 1972, and the million dollars or more contributed in 1972 by milk producers both to the White House and the Democratic-controlled Congress could be explosive—if they are thoroughly explored. But in general the chairman's bold pledge last May has been vitiated by the committee's inability to sort out and follow through on its own distasteful findings.

Meanwhile what of Watergate itself? John Dean's sworn testimony directly involving Mr. Nixon in knowledge of, if not participation in, criminal activities was a turning point. From that moment on the committee was obliged to address itself to the guilt or innocence of the President. Discovery of the White House tapes of conversations among key witnesses not only reinforced that obligation, but made possible a simple means for determining the accuracy of Dean's accusations. But it becomes less and less likely that the evidence in the tapes will soon be wrested from the tight grip of the White House, if at all. And as time goes on the pressures to get that evidence diminish.

The hard truth is that neither the senators nor the people have much heart for finding out and acting upon the worst. Public ambivalence can be found in the polls. An overwhelming majority believes that the President knew of the Watergate cover-up. Almost 25 percent believe the President had prior information on the bugging plan—an intuitive judgment since no proof has ever been presented to support that suspicion. Yet almost 70 percent of those who think the President knew of the cover-up say they are against impeachment or even some milder censure. In short the public reflects the mood of its so-called leaders, and seems to be saying that more is to be lost by putting the President through the wringer—whatever he may have done—than in letting him limp along. Most congressmen don't want to uncover any presidential role in Watergate because that might require an effort to impeach. And the legislators, along with the public, fear not only the turmoil that would result, but also the direct responsibility—through voting—that would fall on each of them. The be-all and end-all for most congressmen turns out to be not much different from the President's—survival.

Of course Congress has its more courageous members who hope for change as a result of Watergate, however small. They want to take heart from the President's recent private meetings with Democratic leaders. They welcome the President's backing away a bit from his intransigence on some matters in dispute. They take satisfaction in the appointment of Henry Kissinger as secretary of State and the manner in which Kissinger, during his confirmation hearings, made pledges to consult regularly and share information with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Congress, however, has little staying power, and the President has a great deal. In its first week back from the summer recess each house showed that Watergate has not appreciably shifted the balance of power to Capitol Hill. The House sustained a presidential veto of an insignificant appropriation needed for emergency medical services. It also, to the satisfaction of the administration, voted to delete from an appropriations bill a Senate proposal for congressional approval of overseas military base agreements and of fund cutoffs for the State Department, if the department refused to furnish requested information to House and Senate committees. Opposition to the measure was led by Speaker Carl Albert. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas E. Morgan stood at the chamber door suggesting members vote no.

Last July at the height of the Ervin committee drama, the House, led by its Appropriations Committee, eliminated a $1.5 million White House special projects fund after a committee was refused information on how the money was spent in 1972. It was alleged that Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt's salary came from that fund, along with money that paid for the Ellsberg psychiatrist burglary. The House also tacked on a requirement for reporting to Congress of any expenses on a President's private property—a direct response to exposures of San Clemente construction. Last week the Senate reversed both House initiatives by overwhelming votes. Floor manager for the Senate bill that reinstated the fund was Watergate committee member Joseph Montoya. Three Ervin committee colleagues voted for the White House position.

If the Ervin committee ends by bickering over who has told the truth and if Congress fusses and frets about the White House but has no clear idea or will of its own about the needs of the nation, will we return in effect to the pre-Watergate situation, but with deeper public cynicism about politics? That prospect, almost inconceivable a few short months ago, now looms as a possibility.

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# Exit Allende

In the fall of 1970 a senior Central Intelligence Agency official by the name of William V. Broe proposed a plan to "accelerate economic chaos" in Chile as a way of blocking Marxist candidate Salvador Allende Gossens, who was then running for president in a three-cornered election. According to a Senate subcommittee, which recently revealed that information, the Nixon administration finally abstained from putting the plan into effect. But it was economic chaos that led to the downfall and death of Allende last week, and so the suspicion is bound to arise that his collapse partly resulted from the kind of covert political maneuvers the CIA has been carrying out in Latin America for years. It would be foolish for the US government to deny involvement in the coup, since it hasn't been accused, and anyway denials are usually construed as backhanded confessions of guilt. It would also be foolish for the International Telephone and Telegraph Company and other US firms, whose holdings in Chile were nationalized by Allende, to attempt to regain their positions, since such efforts might be interpreted as support of or complicity in what happened.

The fact that Allende was toppled by a military junta is a tragedy for Chile, which for decades has been one of Latin America's most stable and prosperous democratic nations. The tragedy is compounded by the likelihood that the country may not soon regain its equilibrium. Just as Allende's leftists were opposed by right-wing elements, now the conservatives who have come to power face the hostility of revolutionaries, and this polarization portends more violence and turmoil. The coup, moreover, may inspire soldiers elsewhere in Latin America to attempt to take over fledgling democracies.

Underlying the upheaval in Chile was a growing conflict over economic measures. The leftists, who have been strong for years, backed Allende's program to put Chile on the road to socialism; some believed that he was moving too slowly. The middle class, in contrast, resented his nationalization of private enterprises, and it found sympathizers among ambitious military officers. The difficulties that led to the coup began this summer with a strike of truck owners protesting Allende's alleged intention to merge their small operations into a large, state-run firm. The strike paralyzed the movement of supplies into Chile's cities and was aggravated by severe shortages despite attempts to purchase wheat from Argentina and the United States. There is no reason, however, to forecast that the generals who have supplanted Allende will improve the economy, whose growth rate has been falling since the early 1960s. They are apt to be as nationalistic as Allende in order to satisfy Chilean public opinion, and hence their chances of attracting foreign investment are limited. Nor are they any more experienced in the management of economic affairs than the civilians they have replaced, and they could be a good deal more inept.

The United States shares in the larger responsibility for Allende's failure. For the many grand designs aimed at Latin American development put forth in Washington over the years have come to little. As a consequence Chile suffered from neglect as much as it did from its own internal tensions, and its troubles may be repeated in other states south of the border.

# Military Spending

The Department of Defense appears to be heading for a major confrontation with the Senate over a $22 billion request for weapons research, development and procurement. The House Armed Services Committee tinkered with the bill and reported a $21.4 billion measure, but the House, in a surprising show of independence, lopped off $950 million. Just prior to the August congressional recess the Senate Armed Services Committee reported a $20.4 billion authorization. The Senate takes it up this week and further cuts seem likely.

The major battle will be fought over the Trident ballistic-missile submarine. (See "Politics under the Water," *TNR*, June 9, 1973.) Two years ago the administration accelerated the Trident program as a "bargaining chip" at the strategic arms limitation talks. Although a SALT agreement limiting submarine- and land-based ballistic missiles was signed a half year later, the administration did not return Trident to its original schedule; all that changed was the Pentagon's rationalization for a Trident speed-up. Where once it had been sold to Congress as a "signal to the Soviets . . . in the face of a growing Soviet threat," officials began to say that "an accumulation of threats, indications, as well as an awareness of trends" in Soviet forces justified the acceleration of Trident. Just *what* "threats," "indications" and "trends," the Pentagon did not stipulate.

The challenge to Trident will be led by Senator Thomas McIntyre (D, NH), who as chairman of the Senate Armed Services subcommittee on research and development has been following Trident from the time it was only a twinkle in the admiral's eye. Though generally sympathetic to Pentagon R&D, McIntyre believes the present Trident program is too much too fast. In committee he convinced that essentially conservative body that the administration's $1.5 billion request ought to be halved. At first the motion carried 8-7, but after a few frantic phone calls from the losers to the vacationing Senator Goldwater, the story was told that Goldwater's proxy had been miscast. An aide to the Arizona Republican dutifully accepted blame, a

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new vote was ordered and this time the full Trident request was passed 8-7.

During the August recess McIntyre organized his committee colleagues who had opposed the Trident speed-up and got them to agree upon a single set of "separate views" on the controversial submarine. This diverse bipartisan coalition includes conservatives (Byrd of Virginia and Dominick), centrists (Cannon and Saxbe) and liberals (Hughes and Symington). Building on this support, McIntyre will introduce a floor amendment similar to his committee motion. Its key features are a $885 million reduction in the fiscal year 1974 authorization, construction of the first boat by 1980 instead of 1978 and a schedule of two boats a year rather than three. "This alternative program," note the seven senators, "is similar to DOD's original proposal outlined in 1971 which was the honed and tempered product of years of review and careful, systematic analysis by DOD's planners."

The McIntyre amendment has been gathering support in the Senate and the navy is running scared. Since Congress reconvened early this month admirals have become as familiar in the corridors of the Senate's office buildings as Senate pages. Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, the chief of naval operations, and Vice Admiral Hyman Rickover, deputy commander for nuclear propulsion, have been leading the shoeleather brigade. The admirals have been talking to their usual allies, and they have even been visiting Senate doves, trying without apparent success to convince them of the wisdom of speeding up Trident. So desperate has the navy become that Zumwalt charged that "Soviet agents" were on Capitol Hill lobbying against the new submarine.

Unlike last year's 47-39 defeat of a similar Trident amendment, this year's vote is expected to be very close. Supporters of the McIntyre amendment claim they have 49 votes thus far, so the outcome is likely to hinge on absentees (or the Vice President's tie-breaker). The otherwise bright prospects of the McIntyre amendment have unfortunately been marred by the Connecticut and Rhode Island senatorial delegations. Because Trident means jobs in both states, the four senators are expected to vote against the amendment.

Ironically the defense lobby now finds itself in the same position as the peace lobby of several years ago. Because the Senate Armed Services Committee cut a number of weapons requests, the military and its allies must now fight for amendments to *restore* the cuts. In short they are in the awkward position of having to argue against the collective wisdom of the committee.

The air force wants $475 million to continue development of the B-1 bomber, but the committee cut $100 million. The committee was disturbed because, after receiving countless reassurances that all was going as scheduled, the air force finally admitted that "serious difficulties had been encountered in the program." When the committee subsequently questioned the secretary of the air force about the B-1's problems, he was "unwilling to assure the committee that the revised program would be adequate and that further increases in cost or program slippage would not occur." The committee's $100 million cut was meant as a warning to the air force that "the B-1 development program must show marked improvement . . . if it is to be continued as a viable program." The service was also "encouraged to seriously consider other alternatives to the B-1 program."

When the Grumman Corporation refused to honor its half-completed contract to build the F-14 fighter, the navy caved in, cancelled the contract and began negotiations with the company for more F-14s at a higher price. (See "The F-14 Fatcat," *TNR*, August 11, 1973.) The committee responded by cutting $505 million of the navy's $703 million requested. A new contract has reportedly been reached by the navy and Grumman; its details will have to pass committee scrutiny before the funds are restored.

The committee killed two small, but strategically significant research programs. Again led by Senator McIntyre, the committee voted *no* funds for the strategic cruise missile (SCM) and the light area defense system (LADS). Until the SALT agreements were signed last year, air-breathing cruise missiles were considered obsolete, but when the offensive arms pact limited only *ballistic* missiles, the Pentagon leaped at the opportunity to start building cruise missiles again. While not a violation of the accord, SCM clearly mocks the spirit of SALT. The LADS prototype is more blatant: to deploy such an anti-ballistic missile system the United States would have to abrogate the ABM treaty.

In the past the committee's generosity to the Pentagon made restorative amendments unnecessary. But with direct American involvement in Indochina at an end, automatic deference to the military has been growing out of fashion on Capitol Hill, and superhawks such as Senator Jackson can no longer count on committee backing for every bit of Pentagon exotica. While the restorative amendments will touch relatively minor issues, they should be watched closely. If they are overwhelmingly defeated, it will indicate a substantial decline in the Pentagon's hard-core support.

The size of the armed forces also promises to be controversial. The committee voted unanimously to cut military personnel by seven percent: 156,100 servicemen. This cut should result in savings of $1.6 billion annually. Senator Walter Mondale (D, Minn.) will offer an amendment which would distribute most of the committee's seven percent cut over the upper officer and enlisted ranks to put the top-heavy military in better balance. Another Mondale amendment would cut civilian personnel in Defense by seven percent. The effect of both amendments would be savings of

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more than $2 billion a year.

In July Senate Majority Leader Mansfield said he would introduce an amendment to reduce American forces stationed overseas. The Montana Democrat wants half of the 500,000 US servicemen on foreign soil brought home over the next three years. Although the Senate Democratic Policy Conference went on record last March 15 in support of "substantially reduced" forces abroad, Mansfield's numbers may still be too high for a majority of the Senate.

Although 56 percent of the Pentagon's budget is spent on personnel, weapons spending drives the entire Defense budget. A new fleet of submarines or bombers will require servicemen to operate and maintain them as well as headquarters to direct (or befuddle) the whole operation. Slow the growth of weapons spending and the need for manpower diminishes. Although personnel cuts have yet to equal previous reductions in weapons, the Senate Armed Services Committee moved a step in the right direction with its seven percent cut in military forces. The Mondale and Mansfield amendments would be further steps.

Majorities in both chambers now sense that the Pentagon's budget has gotten out of control, but there is still the unresolved question of how best to cut back. (The House bill would allow the Pentagon to decide where to make $950 million in cuts; the Senate will individually decide the merits of each contested budget item.) The Constitution gives Congress the power to "raise and support armies" and "provide and maintain a navy," but it has not been used much in recent years. Exercising legislative control over the military promises to be long and arduous, and opposition to this "congressional renaissance" (President Nixon's phrase) will be formidable. The President, his "generation of peace" and his summons to budget the economy notwithstanding, as much as threw down the gauntlet last week when he threatened to "veto any bill that includes cuts which would imperil our national security." He specifically cited the cuts of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

# Environmental Retreat

To environmentalists' dismay, the President and the Environmental Protection Agency have joined utility companies, auto manufacturers and other major polluting industries in arguing that current energy demands require at least temporary relaxation of air quality standards. Last week the President urged states to modify their sulfur emissions standards to avoid a major heating oil shortage this winter. By relaxing standards enough to allow industries to burn high-sulfur grades of oil, the administration estimates that between 200,000 and 400,000 barrels of cleaner oil will be freed daily for home heating purposes. A few days before the President's message, EPA proposed that certain power plants and smelting companies be allowed to "spread" their sulfur emissions by partially curtailing industrial operations during badly polluted weather. The agency said that the new procedures—aimed at "supplementing" rather than supplanting efforts for more permanent control of such pollutants—were its only alternative to closing the facilities down.

The administration has not yet proved, however, that we must choose between clean air and sufficient supplies of electricity or heat. According to EPA cutting down on the pollution of coal-fired electric power plants has been greatly impeded because of inadequate supplies of low-sulfur coal. How does it know? The government has little information about the sulfur content of our coal reserves, and bases its pessimistic estimates on whatever data coal companies have volunteered to the Department of the Interior (see "Oil and Gas," *TNR*, August 18 & 25, 1973). While EPA's technological experts praise stack gas cleaning systems as the best available means of removing sulfur oxides from gaseous emissions, the agency maintains that some power companies and copper smelters experience substantial difficulties adapting such equipment to their plants. However the National Resources Defense Council has evidence that a number of plants are making unreasonable demands on the manufacturers of the anti-pollution equipment, requiring 15-year guarantees and refusing to pay more than 80 percent of the contract price until the equipment has been in operation for a year. Without these stipulations, NRDC has argued, the plants could be fitted with systems that meet the emissions standards.

Even if EPA has correctly assessed current technological limitations, its new procedures provide little incentive for companies to develop the necessary anti-pollution equipment. Acknowledging this possibility, the agency rationalizes that only a few polluters—about 50 rural power plants and 20 copper smelters—will benefit from its new, emission-spreading plan. EPA plans to restrict the new system to areas isolated from other sources of pollution, yet the proposed regulations do not preclude plants in polluted urban areas from asking for similar treatment if *they* cannot meet their clean air standards.

In the case of heating oil, several facts support the President's assessment of a probable shortage. According to the American Petroleum Institute our stocks of distillate oil are certainly no larger than they were a year ago—and last year only the unseasonably warm weather spared the country from a major shortage of heating oil. In 1971, when there were no threats of a shortage, distillate stocks exceeded present levels by 24 million barrels and demand for oil was significantly lower. Depending on temperatures and a number of weather-related oil production decisions, though, the

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proportions of a possible shortage cannot be determined for another several months.

But last week Senator Abraham Ribicoff (D, Conn.), on the basis of his own survey of 30 oil companies, disputed the shortage predictions. "The [survey] results show clearly that there is no critical shortage among the companies which produce home heating oil; only among the independent operators who have to distribute it," said Ribicoff, noting that East coast inventories will be sufficient to meet the demand for heating oil in that region if independent dealers receive a fair distribution of supplies by winter. Before the administration takes steps to avert a shortage, these differing projections must be resolved.

The federal Clean Air Act allows EPA to exempt states from the standards during particular emergencies, and last year the agency let several states faced with severe fuel shortages ease their environmental regulations. The President's recent message departs from this case-by-case approach, and the legality of such a large-scale move to relax state standards is open to question. Moreover it is not clear that reducing air quality standards can relieve a shortage of home heating oil as Mr. Nixon suggests. His proposal provides no assurance that, if industries are permitted to switch to high-sulfur fuels, newly available supplies of clean oil will be used for home heating.

Legislators have criticized the administration for opposing plans requiring the oil industry to divide supplies among particular categories of users, and the Senate recently passed 79-9 a bill instructing the President to implement such a program. Last week Russell Train—within 24 hours of his confirmation as EPA administrator—announced his opposition to the President's recent stand on air quality and his support of a mandatory oil allocation scheme. Train stressed the need to avoid further appearance of slackening in the move to clean up the environment: "The whole environmental effort is under pressure at the moment. Costs to industries, citizens and communities are beginning to become evident." Contending that an equitable distribution of oil supplies could keep shortages—and thus the pressure to relax air standards—to a minimum, Train asserted that implications of environmentalist responsibility for energy problems were "complete hot air." "The charge that environmental programs will impede economic activity is totally wrong," Train said. "It's just the opposite. It's environmental burdens like the toll on human health that are the real constraints to growth."

Though the allocation bill has attracted considerable conservationist support, holding down supply is at best an indirect way to encourage conservation of energy. For instance to cut federal energy consumption by about seven percent, the General Services Administration has made small lighting and thermostat adjustments in all government buildings. These more direct practices should be encouraged outside of government to limit much wasteful use of energy.

In view of the general failure of its program of economic controls, the administration's reluctance to interfere with the oil market is understandable. But it is wrong to ignore other short-term alternatives that would leave environmental standards intact. One relatively uncomplicated approach would be to place a tax on heating oil if supplies run short. (According to the Internal Revenue Service this type of oil is not currently subject to federal tax.) While avoiding the complex allocation formulas, priority could still be given such users as schools and hospitals by exempting them from the tax. To hasten removal of the tax the oil companies would have an incentive to build more desulfurization refineries and increase clean oil supplies. Meanwhile the tax revenues could supplement federal expenditures on pollution control technology, which have totalled only $85 million since 1968.

# Blame the Anchovies

The night President Nixon went on television to announce the second price freeze and the beginning of Phase IV last June 13, Treasury Secretary George Shultz told newsmen that Phase III had been a flop, and "let's not argue about that." But when reporters mentioned the big grain deal with Russia, he conceded nothing. The billion-dollar wheat sale last fall had not been a mistake because the administration all along had intended to increase farm incomes and encourage the export of farm products. Then on September 7 Shultz retreated a bit: "I think it is a fair statement that they were very sharp in their buying practices, and I think that we should follow the adage if we are burned the first time, why maybe they did it, but if we get burned twice, that is our fault."

The figure of interest that day was the wholesale farm index for August, an average of various price changes calculated by the Labor Department. The wholesale farm index had risen 23 percent, the biggest monthly leap in 60 years. The average included unusual increases in the price of hogs (36 percent), cattle (17 percent), wheat (89.5 percent) and other grains (57 percent). The most inflated prices were for the most popular export item (wheat), one quarter of last year's crop having gone to Russia.

But, Shultz explained, the big wheat deal was *intended* to drive up farm prices; it was to be the beginning of a new age of prosperity for American farmers. What was not anticipated was a worldwide shortfall in the production of feed grains and a resultant scramble for American wheat, corn, soybeans and rice. No one could have predicted that the Humboldt current would shift, that Peruvian fishermen would no longer be able to catch anchovies in nearby waters and that Peru

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would therefore fail to produce the fishmeal it usually exports as a livestock feed. At the same time, the Russian wheat crop failed, African peanuts were hit with drought and Southeast Asian rice fields were swamped with monsoon rain. As reported by the Agriculture Department, the result was an increase of 122 percent in the export of US wheat, a 107 percent increase in other grain exports, a 42 percent increase in rice exports and a 64 percent increase in soybean sales abroad. To describe the phenomenon another way, US farm exports to Japan last year were up 97 percent over the year before, exports to Western Europe were up 49 percent and exports to Russia were up 600 percent. Everybody wanted to buy American crops. Government grain surpluses in the US and other countries were drawn down and sold. So American farmers have been told to put every acre they own into production, and for the first time since the Korean war there are no subsidies this year for *not* growing crops.

American cows, pigs and chickens eat the same feeds that Russian and European ones do, and this year the prices for their feed are being driven up by international competition. No one knows just how long the inflation of meat and grain prices will last, but the feeling is that it could easily continue for a couple of years. Shultz and economists on the Council of Economic Advisers talk about the "big bulge" in food prices, some saying that it is past, others saying that it "still has to work its way through the system." They are debating whether or not the big increase in the value of grain has or has not been passed on to the ranchers, and through them to the meat packers and grocery stores. Experts seem to agree on one point, however: the sudden jump in farm wholesale prices last August was misleading because it was produced by the chaos of shifting government controls. Speculation apparently drove prices higher than actual market values, and several government officials have pointed out that the survey for the August farm index was taken at a time when prices were at their peak. Since then prices have fallen in many categories, and the American Meat Institute predicts that beef prices will not go much higher. At this writing there has been little change in the retail price of beef since the end of the freeze on September 10, but no one doubts that it will rise. The question is how much?

Last year the government was "burned" in the Russian wheat deal because it sold an enormous volume of wheat at a cheap subsidized price just when demand for grain was increasing and just before international prices shot way up. The government did not then move to increase US production; about 60 million acres of crop land were still being held out of production by the set-aside program. It was not until January this year that 40 million of those acres were called back into cultivation—too late for the winter crop—and it was even later (March) when the remaining 20 million were called in. Barry Bosworth, an economist at the Brookings Institution who has studied Nixon's economic controls, says that a charitable interpretation of this blunder is that administration economists simply miscalculated. According to Bosworth Nixon decided that 1972, an election year, was a good moment to engineer an increase in farm incomes for middle America. The big food price bulge would not come until later. To this end Nixon encouraged grain exports without increasing production, and prices rose. The only hitch was that events moved faster and farther than Nixon's advisers had planned. Bosworth says, "The thing got out of control for them; they got a little bit more than they intended. . . They failed to adequately take account of the foreign developments in agricultural production."

There is very little the government can do now to lower prices on farm goods, Bosworth says. "The next time that there can really be a reversal of the price movement is in the spring of next year when people begin to see what the new crop is like. They know now what this year's crop is, and most of them believe it is not adequate to meet both foreign and domestic demand. So those prices will probably continue to drift up until the middle of next year. . . The government now, after being terribly tardy, has done just about all it can to encourage production. The only major measure that the government has available to it now that would have a significant effect on wholesale agricultural prices would be the decision to restrict agricultural exports." But the administration, having had a miserable experience with domestic controls, does not intend to rush into the unknown of export restrictions. Nevertheless there have been some changes. For the first time the Agriculture Department is asking exporters to report new contracts to the government in advance, and also for the first time it is compiling records on export patterns. But this new interest in farm trade won't affect the price of beef. One economist for the Council of Economic Advisers recommends the public sit tight: "I think that if we had to list things in order of importance, the first on the list is patience." If you're angry about the price of steaks, eggs, chickens and bacon, don't blame the President, but the Peruvian anchovies who escaped the nets in 1972.

# Keeping Them Poor

Mr. Nixon justified his veto of the minimum wage bill with two economic half-truths. Raising the current wage floor from $1.60 to $2.20 an hour by next July, as the bill proposed, *would* have increased the nation's labor costs, but by only .4 percent during the first year and by even smaller increments thereafter. Higher wages *would* have been paid to an estimated 3.8 million workers, but they represent only about five per-

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cent of those employed.

Since the minimum wage has been $1.60 an hour for more than five years, the vetoed raise would barely have compensated for increases in the cost of living during that time. Moreover the annual income of a full-time worker (defined as 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year) paid the minimum hourly wage is currently about $1000 below the poverty level of $4300 for a family of four. At $2.20 an hour, a person would annually earn $4576 which, given the present rate of inflation, may about equal the poverty threshold next summer.

During floor debate on the wage bill Sen. Harrison Williams (D, NJ) remarked, "I do not believe a successful anti-inflation program depends on keeping the income of millions of American workers below officially established poverty levels." If it does depend on that, something is radically wrong with the program. In view of the price increases recently granted to the auto and steel manufacturers by the Cost of Living Council, keeping minimum wages to a depressing level seems particularly invidious.

The President's claim that higher minimum wages would actually hurt many low-income workers by reducing employment opportunities is a more subtle distortion. Mr. Nixon correctly asserts that marginal, low-paid workers will be laid off first if their employers have to pay them more. It is also true that certain groups such as youth and nonwhites already have intolerably high unemployment rates. According to the US Department of Labor, nearly 30 percent of black teenagers and about 12 percent of white teenagers were unemployed this summer—and the overall unemployment rate for blacks remains at about twice the national rate. But what is the logic of the President's position? It is that the way to make more jobs is to make them worth less, and the way to more prosperity is to redistribute poverty.

## Veto Sustained

What was celebrated last week as a symbolic victory for the President in his fight with Congress over the budget was a defeat for the public and a sham. The occasion was a vote by the House on September 12 not to override Nixon's veto of an emergency medical services bill. The vote was 273-144, five short of the two-thirds needed for an override. The Senate had already upset the veto (77-16), and when the President learned of the House vote he issued a statement saying, "This shows restraint on the part of some members of Congress to hold the line on spending and join the President's efforts in fighting inflation." But how much money will last week's vote save?

The emergency medical services bill Nixon killed would have provided $185 million over the next three years to help communities improve ambulance services, emergency rooms and emergency aid training. The President said this would be inflationary, as was the second part of the bill, to keep open eight Public Health Service hospitals the administration wanted to close. But in order to win a point for the President in the House, Republicans had to introduce and promise to get presidential support for a new emergency medical services bill that will be the same as the vetoed bill except that it will allow the hospitals to close. At the same time the White House agreed to leave open one of the hospitals. The net result thus appears to be the closing of seven federal hospitals, which one expert said will cost as much to do as keeping them open another year.

# Meet Super-Tex

"He's got style, he's kind of super, big, Texan and looks real great. Sort of a Super-Tex," cooed a national committeewoman from the Southwest after meeting John Connally for the first time at the big reception thrown by Texas Republicans for members of the GOP National Committee. "I don't know what I think about 1976 right now but I'm glad he's a Republican." Her sentiments were echoed on all sides as the silvered, self-assured Connally stood in line for a couple of hours to chat with hundreds of party faithful and speak briefly above the cocktail chatter. It was his kind of crowd—white, well-dressed, middle-aged and tilted well to the right of center. "This is the beginning of a campaign," said a committeewoman from the somewhat more liberal northwest who thinks Connally "adds flair" to the party.

Connally left little doubt in the minds of reporters who crowded into a small hotel room for a pre-reception press conference (the press was barred from the cocktail party until it was nearly over) that he's interested in 1976; in fact he would "stipulate" he's been thinking about it. His friends have been talking to him about it too. Several hundred by his count. In a sudden surge of modesty he allowed that this wouldn't add up to "any great groundswell."

He's staked out his key issue. This country, he explains, is entering "a new era, an era of economic diplomacy," an era that will find the United States a "have-not nation," a unique position after two centuries of lustily consuming its own abundant resources. He ticks off the raw materials this country lacks in a tone certain to set corporate heads to nodding in agreement. That is "the flair" Connally wishes to advertise—a flair for dealing with other nations for raw materials at the right price. He had a fling at it at Treasury

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and the performance impressed the corporate world he has always served politically.

He was candid, almost refreshingly so, about his possible candidacy, listing three major questions that must be answered before he makes the plunge. First, he will have to decide if he's prepared to commit "the rest of my life" to the unique office. Then he will have to decide whether he really thinks he could "contribute something." Finally, there's the question of whether "it's possible to get the nomination and be elected." This one gives him pause, as well it should.

Despite the state of the economy and the Watergate scandals, there's no dearth of candidates jockeying for position, particularly on the party's dominant conservative side where Connally must pick up his initial delegate strength. The troubles in Maryland may eliminate Agnew, whether he's innocent or guilty, but there's still Gov. Ronald Reagan. At the GOP National Committee headquarters on Capitol Hill, they'll tell you Reagan already has his people working the South, hoping to forge an alliance between California and that section in 1976. It would be a formidable bloc, the base of what Mississippi's Clark Reed happily refers to as the "conservative majority" in the GOP. Connally will have to break into that.

Mingling with GOP national committee members, one heard serious mention of White House aide Melvin Laird, Secretary of Interior Rogers C. B. Morton ("he certainly looks healthy and he's still carrying a lot of due checks from 1968"), Sen. Howard Baker, Jr. (R, Tenn.), star of the Watergate panel, national chairman George Bush if he'll go home and get himself elected governor, Gov. Nelson Rockefeller of New York—"he's stronger in my state now than he was in 1968," a committeeman reported with some amazement. (Certifiable liberals such as Sen. Charles H. Percy of Illinois invoke little interest at a gathering of the GOP National Committee.)

In brief not everything's going Connally's way. "His major problem," one committeeman says, "and this doesn't mean I oppose him, is that some incumbent members of Congress and some governors kind of resent that he made it so abundantly clear in 1972 he was supporting only the President. I've heard it here tonight. I heard it earlier in the year." Others have more serious reservations. When a question on the Watergate tapes was raised at the press conference, Connally suggested President Nixon might be justified in ignoring a Supreme Court decision: "I think there are times when the President of the United States would be right in not obeying a decision of the Supreme Court." He could foresee himself, as President, asking for a wiretap: "When it's a question of the security of the nation and the right of the individual, the legal rights of the individual must give way." Nevertheless, he said, he became a Republican because "the preservation of personal liberties has a much better hope under the GOP."

GOP workers around the country will have plenty of opportunity to examine Super-Tex. For 75 days this fall Connally will criss-cross the country—from San Diego to Washington to Houston to Chicago to Austin to Phoenix to New York to Dallas—to talk politics with party workers, professional and corporate leaders. At the reception he told his newly found friends he's willing to help them any way they want in 1974: "I'll stay out or come in, whichever will help you the most." It's a safe bet most of them will want a touch of that flair, so Connally should keep pretty busy next fall. In 1975 he'll make his decision.

**Paul R. Wieck**

## The Nixon Watch

# Back to Work

A sign that the President is recovering from the worst of Watergate's personal effects upon him was the ready admission at his press conference on September 5 that public confidence in him has been "worn away" and that restoring eroded confidence is a problem. True enough, the admission came with a whine. Mr. Nixon suggested that nightly leers and sneers of television commentators dealing in leaked rumor and innuendo, rather than the cascade of proven and indicated wrong that constitutes Watergate, had caused the loss of confidence. But he didn't blink at the fact of lost confidence and he edged closer than he previously had to acknowledging that he himself had lately been through and survived some extremely low moments when he said: "Now, how is it restored? Well, it is restored by the President not allowing his own confidence to be destroyed; that is to begin. And, second, it is restored by doing something." He invited the media and the country to turn their attention from "the more fascinating area of Watergate"—that whine again—to his foreign and domestic initiatives and said that when this happens "the people will be concerned about what the President does, and I think that that will restore the confidence." With a leer and sneer of his own at the journalists in his presence, but also with a healthy note of self-awareness, he concluded: "What the President says will not restore it, and what you ladies and gentlemen say will certainly not restore it."

The low level of confidence in Mr. Nixon that prevails among the reporters who regularly attend his doings and goings predates Watergate and is a poor measure of his current problems. But the reaction in that company of professional doubters to the announcement that he was returning from San Clemente to smog-smitten Washington on the Friday before Labor Day, instead of passing the holiday weekend on

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the pleasant California coast, did indicate the difficulty that the President and his spokesmen have in getting themselves believed even when they deserve belief. Nothing that the spokesmen said dispelled a suspicion that some hidden crisis, the favorite supposition being that it was connected with Vice President Agnew and a two-hour talk that he and Mr. Nixon had in total privacy the day after the President returned, called Mr. Nixon from San Clemente sooner than he'd intended. Maybe it did, but the available evidence was to the contrary. Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler said on the evening of the President's arrival at San Clemente that he probably wouldn't stay over Labor Day. After his August 22 press conference at San Clemente, an event that the President and his assistants rated a success for him, the word passed that he was preparing in California for an early and aggressive show of activity—"doing something"—in Washington and elsewhere. Alexander Haig, the new chief of the President's staff, said several days before the early return was confirmed that Mr. Nixon would be going back sooner than the reporters had expected in order to "recharge his body-clock"—meaning, adjust to the three-hour time difference between Washington and California—before undertaking a heavy Washington schedule.

This explanation could have been taken as a confession, presumably unwitting, that the President has come to be more vulnerable to the strains of travel across continental time zones than he's seemed to be in the past. Reporters who normally are avid for any hint that Mr. Nixon has fallen below par, physically or mentally, didn't grab at General Haig's body-clock metaphor in that way. They laughed at it, bandying it about among themselves as one more example of the silly stuff and talk that emanates from the upper reaches of the Nixon White House. They were so intrigued with this sort of jibe, in fact, that they generally overlooked what may have been an interesting coincidence. In the course of trying to dampen speculation that a sudden call from Vice President Agnew for urgent consultation about his troubles with a federal grand jury investigation in Maryland, and about the possibility of his being indicted, was pulling the President back to Washington, Nixon assistants said that Agnew's request for a meeting with the President was received on Tuesday, August 28, and that the Vice President was in no particular hurry. Some of the same Nixon assistants thought for awhile on that same Tuesday morning that the President was returning to Washington that day, and rearranged their own plans on the assumption that he was. The urgency passed, if there was any, and the President returned on the evening of August 31, with a pack of disbelieving and disgruntled journalists in his wake.

Some insight into the way the President is going about "doing something" is provided by the preliminaries to his September 5 press conference. Despite all the talk from his staff about a newly open White House—and despite considerable effort in California to open the senior White House staff to reporters—the President is dealing now with fewer people than he did in the heyday of departed Bob Haldeman and John Ehrlichman. If such be possible, he is more secretive now than he was then. Some of the few assistants who work closely with him and see him regularly plead, when asked for some clue to how Mr. Nixon really feels about Watergate or the Agnew problem or anything else, for understanding that they don't know because he doesn't tell even them. "He doesn't confide, really confide, in *anybody*," one of these assistants said the other day. Only three assistants—General Haig, Ziegler and Patrick Buchanan—were consulted in any material way during the discussions of when and whether to follow up the August 22 press conference with another one in Washington. The President said in California that he intended to have more press conferences. But he wouldn't say when he'd have the next one. He appears to have been genuinely undecided, torn between ever-deepening dislike for the media and awareness that he generally does well for himself in his encounters with reporters. It was not until late afternoon of Tuesday, September 4, that he finally told Ziegler and Buchanan that he'd have a press conference at 3 pm the next day and authorized Ziegler to stage it as a fully televised extravaganza in the White House East Room. Deputy Press Secretary Gerald Warren, who has replaced Ziegler as the President's daily spokesman, was told of the decision at the last possible moment on the Wednesday morning, just before he was to brief the White House press corps. Raymond Price, one of the President's principal idea men and writers, and Ken Clawson, a press assistant who is doing what he can to open up the White House to reporters, never were told officially that there was going to be a news conference that day. They heard about it from reporters. Afterward Pat Buchanan had a task of a kind that he seldom enjoys. In print and on the air the press conference was widely judged to have been a great success for Mr. Nixon, and Buchanan compiled and digested for the President a stack of transcripts and reports to that effect.

What the President means by "doing something" was memorably illustrated at the White House the next day. He had said at the press conference that he found the record of Congress this year "very disappointing" and suggested that its omissions and mistakes, in matters ranging from cuts in his defense budget to neglect of Nixon measures to develop additional energy sources, could destroy any chances of negotiating strategic arms restraints and reductions with the Soviet Union, bring on acute fuel shortages in the next and succeeding winters, and place the country at the mercy of rapacious Arab oil suppliers. His Republican floor leaders, Senator Hugh Scott and Rep-

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resentative Gerald Ford, discovered in the President's remarks "a note of conciliation and cooperation" that the media had failed to discern and report and Mr. Nixon, in subsequent statements, professed to have an affection and respect for Congress that somehow hadn't emerged from his press conference. In vetoing a bill that would have increased the federal minimum wage from $1.60 to $2.20 an hour by next July 1, the President offered to cooperate with Congress in devising "a moderate and balanced set of amendments" that would accomplish comparable increases in the minimum over the next three years and, in his view, protect instead of imperil "employment opportunities for low wage earners and the unemployed." At mid-afternoon he called photographers and reporters into his office for a picture session with Treasury Secretary George Shultz, who was about to go abroad for a series of trade and monetary negotiations. The President's purpose was to do the little he could about a horrendous jump in the wholesale price index that was to be announced the following day. Shultz was loaded with figures indicating that soybean, hog, corn and some other raw food prices that had contributed to the increase had fallen drastically since the index statistics were collected in mid-August. Mr. Nixon seemed to some of the few reporters who were hanging around the White House press room at the time to be a bit jumpy himself. His talk raced from taxes to inflation to his pending foreign trade bill and the unhappy fact that its prime mover in Congress, Chairman Wilbur Mills of the House Ways and Means Committee, was recuperating in a hospital from a back operation. Mr. Nixon got off one of those flighty disconnected oral passages that don't signify anything but are irresistibly quotable: "Wilbur Mills' incapacity—I don't know if an operation, a disc operation, which if he had asked me, I would have told him never to have had one—I haven't had one, but I have never known one to be successful. The surgeons always want to cut."

The President addressed himself in the next few days to the nation's looming problems with energy sources; to the sheaf of domestic measures, some of them dating back to 1970-71, that he has recommended and Congress has neglected or shelved; and, with more enthusiasm then he has evinced for a good many of the languishing legislative recommendations, to revised versions of the law-and-order themes that served him well in 1968 and 1972. The object of the activity was to show that he was indeed "doing something" and most of it probably helped, as the President had said he intended it to help, in restoring the confidence in him and his presidency that had "worn away." There remain an unchecked inflation and the prospects of more indictments and criminal trials of former staff and Cabinet associates and, it could be, of the Vice President. Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, arguing to appellate judges that the President must not be allowed to withhold tape recordings of Nixon conversations from a grand jury looking into the Watergate scandals, said that the hidden evidence could have to do with criminal conduct and conversation involving the President. So the specter is still there. Getting back to work and "doing something" may obscure the specter for a while but it won't go away.

**John Osborne**

## Moscow Turns the Screw

# Détente and Dissent

## by Anthony Astrachan

East-West détente has had a chilling consequence in Moscow. The long war between repression and dissent has escalated as the Kremlin tried to show the Soviet people that rapprochement abroad does not mean ideological relaxation at home—and Westerners have begun to ask if détente has any meaning when it has such side effects. In recent weeks the trial of Pyotr Yakir and Viktor Krasin for telling Westerners about Soviet violations of human rights, followed by a press conference at which they repeated the confessions they had made in the closed courtroom, reminded many people of the Stalin show trials. Threats to novelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and physicist Andrei Sakharov, probably the best known abroad of all Soviet

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intellectuals, prompted both to speak out more strongly than ever before; Sakharov specifically warned the West that it might be endangered by a détente that was not accompanied by democratization in the Soviet Union.

Richard Nixon apparently sees no such threat and remains determined to maintain reciprocal silence about untoward events as part of his embrace with Leonid Brezhnev. Brezhnev kept the Soviet press virtually silent about Watergate, in contrast to the lip-smacking scrutiny it usually gives scandals in the American system. Political lecturers in Moscow are saying, as Soviet journalists and diplomats abroad did earlier, that the fuss over Watergate is an attempt by American cold warriors to kill détente. Some link it to Israel and Zionism, now the chief villains in Soviet propaganda, by claiming that 75 percent of the American press is controlled by Jews. That notion will come in handy if they are ever authorized to answer questions about American press concern with dissent. (One lecturer admitted recently that he was getting questions about Sakharov but not answering them.) The press silence and the lecturers' bewildered propaganda both testify to the strain that Watergate puts on the Soviets' automatic respect for authority, expressed long before détente or Watergate by the Russian friend who said it was impermissible for an American to call Nixon a nonenitity. The silence and the propaganda are probably also meant to strengthen Brezhnev's hand against Kremlin critics who may have cited Watergate as one reason for doubts about Brezhnev's policy of détente.

The general secretary must have been happy that the Soviet silence had the added effect of making the President feel good—and even happier when Nixon responded in kind. Just as the world was watching the unfolding drama of dissent, Nixon announced that Treasury Secretary George Shultz would lead an economic delegation to Moscow in October. Not a word in public about Yakir or Krasin, Sakharov or Solzhenitsyn. His silence contrasted with the criticisms voiced by Willy Brandt and the West German Social Democratic Party despite their Ostpolitik commitment to the Soviets. It also looked hollow when the American National Academy of Sciences warned the USSR Academy of Sciences that American scientists might not participate in the joint projects that are meant to be one of the fruits of détente if the Soviets keep harassing Sakharov. Rep. Wilbur Mills joined in with a new pledge to oppose trade concessions "if the price is to be paid in the martyrdom" of people like Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn. Repression, like Watergate, may frustrate Mr. Nixon's policies even as he tries to ignore them both.

It poses another problem for Henry Kissinger, who admitted under questioning by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he felt "emotionally connected" with Sakharov—not surprisingly, since his endorsement decorates the American edition of Sakharov's 1968 book advocating convergence of the best in the Soviet and American systems. But Kissinger insisted that "we must proceed on the course on which we are," the course of trade concessions that will further improve relations with Moscow.

This seemed to some observers to throw in doubt the whole Western strategy at the European Security Conference, a strategy of insisting on freer exchanges between East and West as the price of the Western goods and technology that the Soviets want. Brezhnev himself seemed to be approving some concept of freer exchanges in a speech at Alma Ata in Kazakhstan last month, but *Pravda* published an authoritative article a day later reiterating the need for ever tighter controls. Perhaps the crackdown is not Brezhnev's own idea but his critics' price for détente. In any case it seems clear that Soviet dissent is not purely an internal matter but one with many foreign implications.

Dissent has purely internal roots however—in the Stalin era. Yakir spent 17 years in prison camps after Stalin ordered the execution of his father, army Commander Iona Yakir, in the 1937 purges. At his trial, he departed from the carefully rehearsed script to insist, "the main reason for my activity was my belief that Stalin was a criminal and that the crimes of Stalin must not be allowed to be repeated." Solzhenitsyn's three most powerful novels are based on his experience of Stalin's camps and their consequences. A friend of his in Leningrad recently committed suicide after the KGB forced her to reveal the location of a typescript of a fourth Solzhenitsyn novel about the camps, still unpublished in the West. The link between Stalinism and dissent is important because Stalin appointed Alexei Kosygin to the USSR cabinet for the first time in 1939 and made Brezhnev a candidate member of the Presidium, as the Politburo was called in 1952. They do not want a return to Stalinist terror—Yakir and Krasin were sentenced to three years in prison and three in exile from Moscow while Stalin would have had them shot—but they do not like attention called to Stalin's crimes by which they profited. Indeed they forced Khrushchev to stop his destalinization campaign in 1962.

Under Khrushchev there were flare-ups of dissent—

**COMING:** Stanley Karnow reports from New York on the state of the UN as it enters its 29th year

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in protest against the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, for instance. Under Brezhnev and Kosygin there has been an almost continuous sequence of dissent and repression, starting with the arrest of Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel in 1965 for publishing their writings abroad. Each trial produced new protests, new arrests, new trials. Some protesters went to prison or psychiatric hospitals, some did not. The hard core of political dissidents numbered at most a few hundred in a population of 242 million. They agreed only on the need for open discussion and the rule of law and pursued a score of conflicting political ideas. Neither Soviet nor Western observers thought they could cause any significant change.

But their mere existence enraged the authorities because it refuted the Kremlin's claim to omnipotence and omniscience and because they kept at least the possibility of change alive. They became a nexus for thousands of religious and national-minority dissenters who fill the prison camps. Soviet Jews put some of their ideas to good use, combining their own collective protest with foreign pressures to achieve the emigration of more than 70,000 people in three years.

The dissidents' worst offense however was to tell the world what was going on in the Soviet Union. In 1968 anonymous dissenters started the Chronicle of Current Events, a bimonthly Samizdat bulletin with news of interrogations, arrests, trials and other happenings. (Samizdat means "self-published," usually typed in many copies and distributed by hand.) Yakir and his friends told Western correspondents about significant repression, knowing that the correspondents' reports would be broadcast back to the Soviet Union in Russian by the BBC, the Voice of America, Radio Liberty and European stations. Their information and the chronicles always proved accurate when put to the test. Yakir said many times that silence had enabled Stalin to destroy millions of people and that if the dissidents made sure people knew about new acts of repression, Stalin-scale terror would never return.

The KGB started Case 24, an intensive prosecution of this subversive activity, in December 1971. Yakir, long protected by popular memory of his father, was arrested in June 1972 and the chronicle made its last appearance in November 1972. Yakir, deprived of the alcohol to which he was addicted and subjected at the very least to psychological pressure based on his fear of dying in prison, began to inform on his friends. At least 10 people were arrested and the tiny band of surviving dissidents was devastated. Yakir's behavior at his trial this month was a startling contrast to his attitude three years ago. He and Krasin "confessed" to active roles in the production of the chronicle. They said that most of their activities were directed from abroad, particularly by the anti-Soviet emigré group called the People's Labor Movement (known in Russian as NTS). They said they had fabricated some of the "slanderous" information they had given foreigners. At their press conference Yakir surprisingly confirmed that he had told David Bonavia of the *London Times*, "if they beat me, I will say anything. I know this from my former experience in the camps. But you'll know it will not be the real me speaking." Yakir said at the press conference that he had not been mistreated and that he did not understand how Bonavia "could publish a private conversation in the press."

Yakir also implicated Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn, who used to maintain a careful distance from the dissidents and from each other. Sakharov is a nuclear physicist who played a major role in the development of the Soviet hydrogen bomb. As a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences he belongs to a privileged elite. That made his essay urging cooperation and eventual convergence between the United States and the Soviet Union a sensation in 1968. "Convergence" became a dirty word in the ideological lexicon, a sharp irony for a man now accused of opposing détente. In 1970 he and Valentine Turchin, a physicist, and Roy Medvedev, a historian, wrote an appeal for democratization in the Soviet Union to cure "breakdown and stagnation" in the Soviet economy and close the "suicidal" gap between the state and the intelligentsia. Later that year he founded a committee on human rights that tried to provide a legalistic equivalent of the dissident effort. He attended major dissident trials

*Hands across the sea*

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until he was stopped early this year, and began to meet foreign correspondents himself.

This year the official press criticized Sakharov by name for the first time. He had some "conversations" with the KGB. In August the deputy prosecutor general of the USSR called him in and warned him to stop making "anti-Soviet" statements to foreign newsmen. Sakharov's answer was to give correspondents the complete text of his interview with the prosecutor as he could reconstruct it from memory. Then he held a press conference in his Moscow apartment, incredible by all previous standards, and told correspondents that détente would turn out to be "very dangerous" unless it were accompanied by some democratization of Soviet life and some reduction of Soviet isolation from the world. He warned that Western trade and aid would help the Soviets dispose of economic problems that they cannot solve themselves, which he said would enable them to build up strength that might make the world "helpless before this uncontrollable bureaucratic machine." He called the Jackson amendment, which would deny most-favored-nation trading status to the Soviet Union as long as it restricts emigration, a symbol of "the fact that rapprochement with the USSR must include some kind of control on this country, so it cannot become a threat to its neighbors." Uncontrolled rapprochement, Sakharov said, would mean "cultivating a country where anything that happens may be shielded from outside eyes—a masked country that hides its real face."

This sparked an intensive campaign of collective letters in which scientists, writers, composers, agriculturalists and others denounced Sakharov—many of them clearly under pressure and most of them without having read what he had actually said. The authorities warned him again that he is responsible for his actions, but they also allowed an invitation from Princeton University to reach him through the ordinary mail. That may be a signal that the Kremlin will be content to have Sakharov go into exile, like the physicist Valery Chalidze and the biologist Zhores Medvedev, who though not dissidents in the same sense as Yakir were equally irritating to the authorities. They were given permission to go abroad to lecture and study and were stripped of their Soviet citizenship while abroad.

Solzhenitsyn has always refused such exile lest it dry up the source of his writing. He did not go to Stockholm in 1970 to receive his Nobel Prize for fear he would not be allowed to return. The authorities' dislike of him has mounted steadily since Khrushchev ordered the official publication of "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" in 1962 as part of the second brief destalinization campaign.

Solzhenitsyn kept on writing despite the fact that his later novels reached Soviet readers only through Samizdat. He spoke out rarely but eloquently—against his own expulsion from the USSR writers union, against the brief confinement of Zhores Medvedev in a psychiatric clinic. His books and protests became a hard flame refracting the whole spectrum of Soviet dissent.

Last year he met with Western correspondents for the first time to describe the official campaign to "suffocate" him, from press denunciations to bureaucratic interference in his divorce and remarriage. In August he gave his second interview, warning that if he died suddenly or mysteriously the world should blame the KGB. He also warned that major works, completed but kept hidden because they were so sensitive, would be released after his death. He did not say so, but he was probably referring to *The Gulag Archipelago*, the documentary novel containing the names of 200 people who described prison-camp tortures and other nightmares to him. He announced the seizure of a copy of this work in Leningrad later after learning that his friend had committed suicide over it. (Gulag is the acronym for main labor camp administration.)

In the interview Solzhenitsyn seemed to identify himself openly with dissidents for the first time. He cited the cases of Gen. Pyotr Grigorenko, held in a mental hospital for protesting the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia; Vladimir Bukovsky, whose arrest in March 1971 for telling the world about the political abuse of Soviet psychiatry was the first step in the current crackdown; Andrei Amalrik, whose arrest and retrial when he was due to be released from prison drew protests from foreigners who admired his individualist writings; Zhores Medvedev and Sakharov. Solzhenitsyn noted that he himself does not agree with many of Sakharov's proposals but said that anyone who has read Sakharov "cannot help seeing his deep knowledge about the processes of Soviet life, his pain for his own country, his torments because of mistakes that he did not make, his good-hearted conciliatory standpoint . . ." In other words he put Sakharov in the same moral dimension as himself, a significant gesture.

It is not clear exactly why Solzhenitsyn spoke out when and as he did. But he offered a hint when he said "the Western World, by its publicity, has already helped save many of our oppressed." This in turn recalled a passage from his Nobel Prize lecture that shows how much he and Sakharov have in common—a passage that Nixon and Brezhnev might do well to remember during their silent embrace:

"Suppression of information renders international signatures illusory. Within a muffled zone it costs nothing to reinterpret every agreement, to forget it as though it never really existed . . . There are no internal affairs left on our crowded earth. And mankind's sole salvation lies in everyone making everything his business—in the people of the East being vitally concerned with what is happening in the West; the people of the West vitally concerned with what goes on in the East."

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# Secretary Kissinger

## by Stanley Karnow

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee had been trying for years to bring Henry Kissinger into an open session in order to probe the Nixon administration's conduct and intentions in the field of foreign affairs. But Kissinger, apparently fearful that his special brand of secret diplomacy would be jeopardized, repeatedly refused to appear. Within the past week, however, the committee finally got its chance as he came up for confirmation as secretary of State, and, as it turned out, his fears were groundless. Facing the senators in the ornate caucus room, the familiar scene of the Watergate show, he once again demonstrated that he may be the most articulate man in Washington. His confrontation was vastly simplified, though, by the fact that the senators who had roared like lions in anticipation of the feast revealed themselves to be lambs. Thus Kissinger's vow to "explain our philosophies, purposes and policies to the public" remains, at least for the present, an unfulfilled promise.

The main issue at stake in the hearings was not whether Kissinger would be approved. That was a foregone conclusion. Yet the hearings could have been significant in several respects. They could have investigated in depth Kissinger's role in the wiretapping of his aides and other dubious administration activities. They could have reviewed in detail the President's past and current policies on subjects ranging from Indochina, the Middle East and Latin America to arms control and international monetary matters. They could have explored such grand strategies as the Nixon Doctrine and Kissinger's balance of power concept, whose real meaning has never been fully clarified by official spokesmen. They could have examined at length the respective responsibilities of the White House and the Congress in foreign affairs, and, in particular, in the authority to wage war. And, most importantly from its own point of view, the committee could have used the meeting to set up guidelines to govern the future relationship between the executive and legislative branches in the foreign policy realm. In short here was an opportunity to take advantage of Kissinger's pledge of candor. Time was no problem, since, as committee Chairman J. William Fulbright noted, Kissinger had long been "functioning forcefully" as secretary of State without the title. But the senators chose instead to skim the surface, with the result that the hearings offered little solid evidence to substantiate Kissinger's claim, made last month, that there will henceforth be "a greater institutionalization of foreign policy than has been the case up to now."

It seemed to me as I watched the hearings that even the more dynamic members of the committee are, despite their rhetoric, essentially less interested in challenging the President than in sharing his power in foreign relations, and they therefore treated Kissinger gently as a way of signaling their receptivity to a truce with the administration. Kissinger had perceived this attitude, and, conforming himself to it comfortably, he appeared to undergo a complete transformation. No longer would foreign policy be shaped by the "esoteric initiatives of a small group of specialists," he told the senators. He would rely on the "dedicated professionals" of the State Department and seek to infuse them "with a sense of participation, intellectual excitement and mission." He would also work out means to have the committee participate "more fully in the design of our foreign policy" in order to achieve a "broad consensus" in a "climate of mutual trust," and, consistent with that promise, he assured the senators that he would "testify formally" on all his activities. In response Fulbright shelved his former complaints and voiced the hope that "we begin a new era." With that tone set the interrogation that followed lacked a cutting edge.

The only real problem in the hearings arose over the wiretapping of 13 administration officials and four newsmen that went on from the spring of 1969 through early 1971, and that was eventually resolved when Attorney General Elliot Richardson conceded to showing a memorandum on the subject to two members of the committee. Kissinger indicated to the senators that the taps were not his idea even though he considered them necessary. But the senators did not raise his equivocal statements of last May, when he first denied knowledge of the taps and soon afterward admitted that he had supplied the names of those to be bugged. Nor did the senators cite the disclosure in May of William Ruckelshaus, then acting FBI director, who said that the effort to discover leaks through the use of electronic surveillance stemmed from an "initial conversation" in the spring of 1969 between Kissinger and the late J. Edgar Hoover. In reply to one senator at the hearings Kissinger asserted that he opposed future wiretaps without legal court order, but he added that he would "like to leave scope for overwhelming danger" to national security. Nobody asked

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# Conversations in the Court

## What's In a Name?

*"Kissinger Opts for 'simple' title"*
The Washington Post, *August 23, 1973*

*Counsellor Laird:*
Lord Kissinger, for your new role at State,
Your choice of title, "Excellency," strikes
The ear and mind as not quite right.

*Lord Kissinger:*
Indeed? Consolidation of tasks
Beyond our shores is my fair fate.
While Richard wrestles night and day
With soggy problems of the realm
Domestic, I steer, on his behalf,
The ship of state through troubled waters.
I know not where I'll go or whom I'll meet.
In interchanges with the sultans and the potentates,
How best for me to be addressed, to show at once
My noble place, or rank the equal of all save one,
Our Royal Grace?

*Counsellor Laird:*
"Excellency" lacks a certain touch.
"Prince of Peace" would suit you well, but long
Another's had that name. A proper title to please
The peasant's ear and not offend the King
Is difficult to find.

*Lord Kissinger:*
The English language lacks the range
And nuance of some other tongues, but
Let it be. I will confess that "Prince"
Has crossed my mind.

*Counsellor Laird:*
The hint of royal succession bars it from
An easy use, remembering that but one
Head fits Richard's Crown.

*Lord Kissinger:*
The title is a tedious thing, and
Unavoidably, must soon be chosen.
For the nonce, Bold Mel,
How would it be,
To call me just plain Henry.

**Robert J. Myers**

him who would determine the "overwhelming danger." Similarly the senators accepted Kissinger's claim that he was unaware of the tricky doings of David Young, a former assistant recently indicted as one of the White House "plumbers." Last month, though, former Central Intelligence Agency Director Richard Helms testified that Young had told him that Kissinger and John Ehrlichman accorded the "highest priority" to the preparation of a CIA "psychological profile" of Daniel Ellsberg.

The issue of Kissinger's part in or knowledge of the administration's illicit maneuvers is serious, even though the committee tended to treat it as symbolic. For, as Daniel I. Davidson suggests in the article that follows, the relationship between a cabinet officer and the bureaucracy in a modern state must be based on trust. The bureaucrats leaked because they were ignored by the White House and so sought other outlets in which to express their views. The administration responded with wiretaps and even lie detector tests, further demoralizing the bureaucrats. As the President's national security adviser, Kissinger scarcely trusted his own small staff. For him to place his faith in the huge State Department, as he promises, would indeed be a big change.

Replying to the senators Kissinger defended his October 26 press conference in which he said that a Vietnam peace was "at hand," explaining that his aim at the time was to "salvage the negotiation." The senators did not query him on the need for the intensive bombings of North Vietnam that were launched late last year after the Vietnam talks temporarily broke down. He also declared himself in agreement with the secret bombing of Cambodia beginning in the spring of 1969, explaining that the action had the acquiescence of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, then Cambodian chief of state. But the senators did not ask him to define the authority vested in the President that permits him to undertake military action even with the accord of a foreign ruler. Nor did the senators ask him to describe the "delicate" negotiations that were supposedly taking place early in the summer as the administration was attempting to dissuade the Congress from stopping the US bombing of Cambodia by August 15. And what are the practical benefits of the administration's détente with the Soviet Union and China? Why, with this tremendous accomplishment, is the President calling for the biggest defense budget in history? Those were other questions the senators failed to pose.

Despite these and other ambiguities in the hearings, Kissinger may well carry out his pledge to pursue a truly bipartisan policy with the active cooperation of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Here again, however, it was not at all clear during the hearings whether the members of the committee have carefully considered bipartisanship—even if Kissinger can really accommodate to it. Consensus during the days

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of Senator Vandenberg contributed to the Cold War, and, as Stanley Hoffmann has pointed out, it was the Cold War consensus that led to the Tonkin Gulf Resolution and the involvement in Vietnam. Difficult as it is, continued debate in the foreign policy sphere may be a healthier alternative. But if the hearings augur the future, Kissinger could conceivably serve as secretary of State with neither the encumbrances of consensus nor the challenge of sharp opposition—which is basically the way he has been operating so far.

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# *Kissinger's Problem: Mutual Trust*

John F. Kennedy came to the White House determined to give the State Department one last chance. Richard Nixon, who had had long experience with the Foreign Service, assumed the presidency determined that the department had had its last chance: Henry Kissinger was his alternative. Now Kissinger has been given the assignment of leading and revitalizing the department he publicly emasculated and for whose abilities he has barely disguised contempt. ("It is no accident," Professor Kissinger once wrote, "that most great statesmen were opposed by the 'experts' in their foreign offices, for the very greatness of the statesman's conception tends to make it inaccessible to those whose primary concern is with safety and minimum risk.") Aside from his disdain for the bureaucrats, Kissinger has made it harder to develop a trusting relationship by the unprecedented and illegal wiretapping of men he had known for years and selected for his own staff. It has not escaped notice that Richard Pedersen, former counselor of the department and the closest associate of Secretary Rogers, was reportedly wiretapped shortly after the invasion of Cambodia, without Rogers' approval or knowledge.

A self-described loner, a man fearful of leaks who often jokes about his "paranoia," Kissinger has cut members of his chosen elite, the National Security Council staff, off from information they consider necessary to do their jobs. If a man on Kissinger's personal staff in the White House was shifted to the nearby NSC staff, his access to cables was considerably reduced. To those working blocks away at State, it became a major feat to get the text of a backgrounder (such as the one explaining the Nixon doctrine) that was given to newspaper reporters.

The bureaucracy retaliated as best it could. Midway through Kissinger's term as presidential adviser, I remarked to a diplomatic reporter that it was my impression that most national security leaks originated either in the Pentagon or the White House. He said that had been true during the Johnson years, but that the warfare between Kissinger and State had reached the point that when State came into possession of a document capable of damaging Kissinger, he, the journalist, was likely to receive a call.

If Kissinger is to be not only a skillful diplomatic virtuoso but also a successful secretary of State, he must make his peace with the bureaucracy. In theory, this should not be difficult. The bureaucracy is trained to obedience and longs to serve an influential secretary of State. Its price for devotion is some degree of information, and at least the appearance of influence. If Kissinger consults the bureaucracy, even if consultations are as superficial as meetings he often holds with former officeholders and academics, State will serve him loyally. Whether he's able to keep bureaucracy happy is not, of course, the main point; it is whether the bureaucracy will be allowed to make its proper contribution. For instance, if the State Department had been consulted on the President's China trip, it would have urged the necessity of informing the Japanese, even if, as seems likely, Japan was deliberately misled to avoid the possibility of a leak that might make the President's live television announcement less dramatic. While the average level of talent in the department is below that of Kissinger's NSC staff, there are officers of outstanding ability at State; Kissinger's staff includes a substantial number of men from State.

Inevitably, Kissinger and his personal staff cannot make all the decisions or even effectively monitor the full range of State Department operations. The bureaucracy, whether informed or not, will continue to take actions which in the aggregate will make foreign policy. So Kissinger would be well advised to moderate his dread of leaks and his distaste for dealing with a cumbersome organization, and to keep his department and embassies as fully informed as possible. If he does not change his style and becomes the only "informed source" at State, the prospect of the department as an institution playing a major role in the shaping of foreign policy will have vanished. And policy will suffer. As Secretary of State Stimson used to say, the way to make men trustworthy is to give them trust.

**Daniel I. Davidson**

MR. DAVIDSON, *formerly a member of the US delegation to the Vietnam peace talks in Paris, worked on Henry Kissinger's National Security Council staff through mid-1969. His telephone was reportedly tapped during his NSC staff tenure.*

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# Stanley Kauffmann on films

## Le Retour d'Afrique

(New Yorker)

## Heavy Traffic

(AIP)

Alain Tanner, the Swiss filmmaker, wants to embrace the world. Fine. Most artists worth their salt, or ours, want to make great art on great subjects, although they usually fail, some ridiculously. Tanner has made two attempts up to now, one of which is very beautiful. His first film, *Charles Dead or Alive*, while exceptionally skillful, skated on pat attitudes about the meaninglessness of money. But his second film, *La Salamandre* (*TNR*, July 1, '72), was a subtle, perceptive, moving work on the shape and possibilities of freedom in industrial society.

Still engaged with engagement, Tanner now slides back toward the easy acceptances of his first film. His new film is being called *Le Retour d'Afrique* here, instead of *Return from Africa*, presumably to keep the title-language consistent with *La Salamandre*. A young Geneva couple are fed up with their lives. She works in an art gallery, he as a landscape gardener and, though they are not conventional people and don't have conventional friends, they are afraid of slipping into the bourgeoisie. They decide to move to Algiers and are encouraged by a letter from a friend who moved there five years before. They sell their car and piano and all furniture except a mattress; they give a farewell party. Then, as they are about to leave, they get a telegram from their friend in Algiers telling them not to come, to await a letter from him.

They think they are going to leave in a few days, so they simply lie low in their virtually empty apartment, a bit embarrassed to tell their friends roundabout that they haven't actually gone yet. They skulk out for food and cigarettes. The best element in the film is the way Tanner transforms an initial small social dodge into a major crisis: the days go on and on and the letter doesn't arrive and the weather changes in the empty apartment. Before the long-delayed letter finally arrives, explaining that the friend is returning, that they should wait and get his tips before they go, we know that they will *not* go. Their "return from Africa" is their return from some days of limbo in their apartment. And the rest of the story shows their gradual slide into the very life they had once tried to flee.

We know this will happen. That's the trouble with the film. Once the telegram arrives asking them to wait, we know everything that will follow: the draining of impulse, the ease of relapse, the realization that you take your problems with you anyway, wherever you go. (And, by the way, is there no bourgeoisie in Algeria?) All this is very familiar ground, on which Tanner casts no fresh light. At the end he has in fact to shift subjects—to women's rights—in order to find some sort of conclusion.

Tanner is intelligent, gifted and (sometimes) fruitfully discontent. His eye searches for the fresh, though non-freakish view. He edits with a pleasantly eccentric rhythm. He overdoes some devices, like repeated slow horizontal pans, and he sinks into one bit of banal symbolism—the destruction of a young tree in a housing project—but, as cinematic experience, his films are always good to watch. So far, only *La Salamandre* has been more (*much* more) than that. *Retour* has two sufficiently interesting young actors, François Marthouret and Josée Destoop, but the better they and the texture are, the more disappointing the film is. We tell ourselves, subconsciously, that a man who makes films this well—stimulated by Godard without being a Godard lackey—must be en route to some substance. But in this case he isn't.

I don't know how long Tanner took to make this film, but it seems to have been made too quickly—or, at any rate, too soon. He didn't probe his material enough, didn't ask it enough questions before he began. I hope he'll wait longer, think harder, imagine more extensively before his next film, which I look forward to.

I walked out of Ralph Bakshi's first cartoon feature *Fritz the Cat* because it was vulgar and dull. I didn't walk out of his second, *Heavy Traffic*, which is vulgar but often interesting.

It mixes animation with some live action as it tells the story of a young New York cartoonist who, while playing a pinball machine (ah, there, Saroyan), wanders off into a (cartoon) fantasy involving a stunning black bar hostess. Subsequently, in live film, he meets her and they "find" each other in Union Square.

The cartoonist is the virginal son of a low-level mafioso, who philanders, and a Jewish mother who strangulates with near-obscene doting. There are ghetto derelicts, drag queens, hookers, mafiosi and other delectations of the New York scene; the tonality is grubbiness. Nothing is hinted at that can be shown, including genitals, and the story gets

*(continued on page 33)*

## Films Worth Seeing

*American Graffiti*. George Lucas probes and fixes adolescent culture of the '60s. Often goes through cliché to quintessence.

*Bang the Drum Slowly*. The baseball picture for those who do and don't like baseball. Good sentiment and humor, though inconclusive.

*Cops and Robbers*. Two NY cops hoodwink some hoods and make a million apiece. Frequently funny and *thoroughly* crooked.

*The Friends of Eddie Coyle*. Robert Mitchum as the Willy Loman of the underworld. Grim, gravelly, an almost clinical study.

*The Hireling*. Sarah Miles and Robert Shaw are excellent as lady and chauffeur in a well-made small tragedy.

*Last Tango in Paris*. Despite what you've been led to think, the Brando-Schneider sex scenes are about a third of the picture. The first few of them are genuinely strong.

*State of Siege*. Costa-Gavras, who did *Z*, deals with the murder of a US official in Uruguay, 1970. Tendentious but gripping; or gripping but tendentious.

*A Touch of Class*. Glenda Jackson can do *anything*, and here she's in an old-style comedy-romance, updated. Mostly fast and frivolous.

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# In the Waiting Room

## Closing Time

### by Norman O. Brown

(Random House; $5.95)

*Closing Time* is Norman O. Brown's latest recantation. In the spirit of intellectual perversity that has characterized his academic career since *Life Against Death*, Brown's new work is an anti-book that celebrates the book, a work that borrows the anti-language of *Finnegans Wake* to celebrate language. It is a perverse theurgy that makes language a godhead by making the godhead a Word. In the beginning was the Flesh made Word.

This is a work about language, that is, in Brown's universe of metamorphosis and paradox, a work about history. All of Brown's eschatological writing can be viewed as an assault on the concept of action, an attempt to transform deeds, acts, into words. Now Brown announces that the "texture of history is the texture of *Finnegans Wake*." Joyce's olympian masterpiece is not, he writes, "about anything": "it is that thing itself." The whole of human life is treated as a text that is not about anything, but *is* that thing itself. Human language holds no privileged place in this world of flesh made words. ". . . If all nature is written then all animals are language animals." Brown's abolition of culture would transform nature into culture, and culture into nature. It is an act of supreme sublimation under the guise of desublimation; the transformation of culture into nature means the abolition of nature, the Body.

Step back a bit. *Life Against Death* was an abolitionist vision. Brown's argument in that work promised a world free from repression, a world of play without work, a redeemed world awakened from "the nightmare of history." The *abolition* of the *tyranny* of the genitals meant, not political revolution, but the abolition of politics. For politics meant the Self, Self-assertion, the Ego, and the Ego meant private property and power. Self-abolition meant the dissolution of History and the advent of eternity in the resurrection of the body. But the Self had to become the instrument of its own abolition: Brown's idealist vision of History as pure symbol-structure, unhinged from the world of work and released (in fantasy at least) from the constraints of society ("Sociability is a disease," Nietzsche had written), eliminated the external world as a reality of the human condition. The inner life turned on itself: the Self became the Other. The only place left to go was inside, ever deeper, a bottomless abyss ending in Nothing.

Brown's critique of the Enlightenment ideal of rationality landed him in mystery but deprived him of any criterion for distinguishing mystery from mystification. The idealist vision of culture, in union with the occult aristocratic tradition of mystery, ended in the solipsism of *Love's Body*. Ostensibly Brown wrote *Love's Body* to torpedo *Life Against Death*. (One book bred upon another. Intellectual play became serious work, the work of extrication from the argument of the first book.) Brown's *Body* resolved the argument with political activism by abandoning argument altogether. The author took refuge and found release in aphorism and quasi-vatic utterance. Argument, criticism, was Self-assertion, the Ego, power and politics and private property. What had begun in criticism ended in silence, and the silence was taken to be poetry. The author of *Love's Body* seemed at last to have discovered his own mode of quietude. (He left quite a wreck in his wake, but that, to be sure, was his mission. Spiritual anarchism thrives on that wisdom. And mystical denial of historical action denies itself any recourse but to act upon itself.)

Acting upon itself *Love's Body* issued forth in a poetics of metamorphosis. That Self was, of course, the Self of an intellectual, Norman O. Brown, a world of words and languages equated with deeds; a self that aspired toward poetry. "Changing the subject" became the slogan of the idealist revolution. In the recent words of John Cage:

> If we could change the language
> That's to say the way men think
> Then we might swing the revolution.

Brown's new movement toward Joyce, imagism and the cyclic philosophy of history of Vico's *New Science* is, then, nothing new. It was all words from the beginning. And it was all recurrence right from the start. *Love's Body* only seemed to "torpedo" *Life Against Death*. There was no change of subject, but only a change of style, new vestments, new authorities. The message throughout, and again the message of *Closing Time*, is the same message: Death and Rebirth. And between the two: Waiting.

New style, new vestments, new authorities. In *Closing Time* Norman O. Brown fashions a collage from *Finnegans Wake* and Vico's *The New Science*. The book has a one-page preface and five cleanly separated sections. At the center of it all is "An Interlude of Farce." If *Life Against Death* represented the abolition of genital assertion ("Down with tyranny!") and *Love's Body* a regression to oral unity ("Encorporate the world!"), then *Closing Time* is an anal amalgam of ancestors: here is the Preface:

> Time, gentlemen, please?
> The question is addressed to Giambattista Vico and James Joyce.
> Vico, *New Science;* with Joyce, *Finnegans Wake.*
> "Two books get on top of each other and become sexual."
> Two books on top of each other—John Cage told me that this is geometrically impossible.
> But let us try it.
> *The book of Doublends Jined.* FW, 20
> At least we can try to stuff *Finnegans Wake* into Vico's *New Science.*
> *One world burrowing on another.* FW, 275
> To make a farce.
> *What a mnice old mness it all mnakes!* FW, 19
> Confusion, source of renewal, says Ezra Pound. Or as James Joyce puts it in *Finnegans Wake:*
> *First mull a mugfull of mud, son.* FW, 286
> *As rational metaphysics teaches that man becomes all things by understanding them* (HOMO INTELLIGENDO FIT OMNIA), *this imaginative metaphysics shows that man becomes all things by not understanding them* (HOMO NON INTELLIGENDO FIT OMNIA). NS, 405

The language of *Finnegans Wake* is stuffed into the theory of historical cycles embraced by Vico. Vico's three ages (Gods, Heroes and Men) correspond to three languages ("First the divine, a dumb language of hieroglyphics or sacred characters. Second,

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the symbolic, consisting of metaphors as the heroic language did. Third, the epistolographic or vulgar, consisting of expressions agreed upon for the everyday uses of life.") Joyce's polyglot confusion of tongues is supposed to be the language of a civilization in decline, a civilization at "closing time," "Pentecostal" language, in Brown's words. On Joyce's authority Brown sees our time as the moment of *ricorso*, the moment in Vico's cycle when the Age of Men gives way to a New Barbarism that issues in a return of The Age of the Gods. We are, he thinks,

> Waiting for the return of the gods
> witnessing the return of barbarism
> the new barbarians
>
> That's where it's at: decline.
> *The Decline of the West*
>
> The sense of an ending:
> Western Civilization is over.
> *And the lamp went out as it couldn't glow on burning, yep, the lmp wnt out for it couldn't stay alight.*
> *On the verge of closing time.*
>
> In the jungle of cities, the new barbarism.
> It is later than you think.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The thing that we dread has already happened.

If that's the case, then, Brown thinks, the proper stance is to wait. And while waiting, Brown says, the appropriate way to behave is to make a farce:

> Farce is the mode of consciousness in which a people take leave of their history

The history of nations, Brown thinks, comes full cycle. The gods will return, following Vico and Joyce and Brown, as they came in the beginning:

> The gods return in thunder . . .
>
> The origin of civilization, thunder;
> the origin of civilization,
> madness . . .
>
> What the thunder said
> DA DA DA
> *Damyata:* Restrain yourselves . . .
>
> Man is maniac
> the Dionysian origin of civilization
> enthusiasm . . .

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Civilization originates in
stammering
. . . . . .
The thunder is God stuttering

In Brown's vision of the New Beginning, civilization means restraint and Dionysus becomes the god of repression. When Brown writes, "let IT speak, the ID," he propounds the undiluted paradox of a *self-restraining id.* And it is this transcendental optimism, no more in the end than a pietistic wish, that Brown adopts uncritically from Vico's providential fiction of ricorsi: *after* barbarism, *after* the End, he finds the inevitable resurrection of a New Humanity:

> And the few
> survivors in the midst of an abundance of the things necessary for life naturally become sociable and, returning to the primitive simplicity of the first world of peoples, are again religious, truthful, and faithful. Thus providence brings back among them the piety, faith, and truth which are the natural foundations of justice as well as the graces and beauties of the eternal order of God.

Vico's edenic fiction becomes Brown's sustaining myth. The way through the politics of farce, perversity and pulverized language ends in a cultural rebirth. And it all happens while "we are waiting." Is it waiting like Ferlinghetti's waiting in *A Coney Island of the Mind?*

I am waiting for the Second
Coming
and I am waiting
for a religious revival
to sweep thru the state of Arizona
and I am waiting
for the Grapes of Wrath to be stored
and I am waiting
for them to prove
that God is really American
and I am seriously waiting
for Billy Graham and Elvis Presley
to exchange roles seriously
and I am waiting
to see God on television
piped onto church altars
if only they can find
the right channel
to tune in on
and I am waiting
for the Last Supper to be served
again
with a strange new appetizer
and I am perpetually awaiting
a rebirth of wonder.

Ferlinghetti is still waiting.

Norman O. Brown's transcendental optimism rests on a massive denial of will. But cultures aren't bodies: they don't die natural deaths, they get *abandoned.* We cannot *will* the health of the body, but we can *will* cultural health. We can act. Brown's pietistic vision would leave us passive before our own condition, but passivity, inactivity, mindless optimism are choices, not inevitable givens. Dreams of total renewal, when they usurp the realities of waking life, may be the worst of dreams.

Step back!

**Albert Schwartz**

# A Failure of Political Imagination (II)

## The Coming of Post-Industrial Society

by Daniel Bell

(Basic Books; $12.50)

*This is the second part of a two-part essay on Daniel Bell's* The Coming of Post-Industrial Society.

One of the most intriguing ideas in Professor Bell's book is the notion that culture—the expressive and symbolic life of society—has achieved a certain degree of autonomy and is in fact hostile to middle-class values and capitalism. Conservative "structural" sociologists and radical theorists alike have long posed the idea of a social system, an interwoven totality of values, social structure and economic institutions. Bell thinks there *was* a system, but that now it is breaking down: the unity of economics and social character so pronounced in the flush heyday of capitalism is disintegrating. A sign of this is the gap between the social structure and the cultural realm. Mass production and consumption are destroying the Protestant ethic; the arena of work still exacts rigid industrial and bureaucratic discipline, but in the realm of consumption, prodigality, display and self-expression reign. At the same time an important shift in intellectual history has taken place: the antinomian and antibourgeois ideas of a handful of 19th-century artists and literary rebels now fill the minds of masses of people—Dostoyevsky's characters hitch rides in our streets. These changes, together with the sheer expansion in numbers of the intellectual classes, have produced a mass adversary culture especially attractive to the educated young.

Bell gives a more accurate anatomy of this new cultural consciousness than uncritical theorists like Charles Reich. At its best the adversary culture has created rather than destroyed form, but its worst traits are far from life-enhancing, and this needs saying too. The celebrants of the counterculture are committing the great historic sin of intellectuals: abandoning the responsibility to make critical judgments, letting some outside arbiter—the party, the movement, the status quo, historical trends—settle the crucial question of values.

The example of the cultural realm coming unstuck from the system is only part of Bell's general argument that the society we see emerging is less of a totality than bourgeois society, with its common values and social character. Bell is attempting to draw a pluralistic map of American reality to set against both radical and "structural" theories. I believe he is right in saying that life in America is growing more fragmented

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and diverse, more pluralistic and less part of a whole than before, and the contradictions and tensions he points to must be accounted for by any satisfactory theory. It is important to replace vulgar generalities about the System with precise information about the way that politics, the economy and the culture operate in distinct and often divergent ways. Yet Bell offers no evidence that status, wealth and power—to take three important categories of analysis—are more separate now than in the past, and his ultimately aimless pluralism fails even to explore the relationship of wealth to power.

This same sense—of questions blurred rather than defined—weakens the final portions of Bell's absorbing discussion of science in the new order. He draws a distinction between the traditional norm of science and what he calls Big Science—the difference between the ideal and the highly political and far from disinterested institution of science, with its bureaucracies, entrepreneurs, operators and crooks. He defends the ideal of science as a norm of open public deliberation and rational thought and I agree with him: the ideal needs particular defending at a time of panicky retreat from the consequences of perverted science and technology. Just as the Protestant ethic became an ideology concealing capitalist reality, and socialism in the Soviet Union came to mask the rule of the elites, so, he says, science risks displacement by politics as the ideology of the post-industrial order. For all the growing intellectual and social sway of science, the major changes in America in the last 40 years—the managed economy, the welfare state, the military arsenals of the preparedness state—came about for political reasons. War as an instrument of politics brought planning, science and expertise into government.

Bell notes this subservience of Big Science to the political realm, but fails to follow through and examine the problematic relationship of science and expertise to politics. Nor, apart from insisting on the growing influence of social science, does he analyze its political dimension or suggest that there might be problems ahead with the highly political institution we may one day call Big Social Science. He plausibly describes the university as a central institution in the new order of things, yet fails to give us the sort of political analysis that would illuminate the relationship between the ideal of the university and its institutional realities. (A good starting point for considering the ideal would be Bell's admirable essay "The Reforming of General Education" [New York, 1966].) In the universities as in the professions we are in for stormy years: valuable traditions, well worth preserving, are going to be threatened at the same time that indefensible vested interests need to be unmasked. To sort the one from the other will take a kind of political intelligence Bell lacks.

The virtues of *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* are many. Its scope and comprehensiveness are awesome. On every page glittering insights and certain set pieces in it could constitute distinguished books all on their own, such as the brilliant intellectual history of speculation on the nature of industrial society. For those who disagree with Bell, as I do, there are important reminders throughout of the way the flux of historical change makes old categories and perceptions obsolete: earlier Marxist predictions of catastrophe were unhinged when the state intervened to save capitalism from its crises and when technology, for all its social costs, became—in Schumpeter's striking phrase—an open sea for the reinvestment of capital. Certainly this book challenges what might be called the thinking left to treat the role of both old and new working classes in a more complex way. I hope that Bell's discussion of culture (which he is elaborating in another work) will provoke more realistic assessments of cultural trends than the dreadful gush we have been getting.

Yet for all its undeniable importance, this exceedingly ambitious book is flawed. I have already stressed at length its main failing: its apolitical character, despite its repeated insistence on the primacy of politics. Let me quickly suggest three other faults.

Bell's sense of history is weak. His eagerness to point up the novelties in post-industrial society leads him to neglect the glacial and cumulative nature of the changes he is chronicling. Much of what he calls post-industrial society was present in the old industrial order, and much of the old order—industrial unions, for example—will persist in the new. Historians, who perhaps have an occupational weakness for stretching the present as far as possible into the past, often argue that the outlines of our present society were laid down in the Progressive era, the period, roughly, between 1880 and 1920. For all our dazed sense of unending change, there are many respects in which we have been living for some time in a rather traditional order whose basic political, social and cultural agendas have remained remarkably stable. Think of the precedents for our present society in the Progressive era: new corporate forms; the advent of political capitalism and governmental interference in the economy; mass warfare; mass consumption; the rise of the great universities; the spread of education to the masses; the growth of bureaucracies, professions and new technical strata; the beginnings of a new radical cultural consciousness among intellectuals. Bell himself points out that the basic machines of daily life, with the two important exceptions of TV and nuclear weapons, were all in place between 1850 and 1940: railroads, steamships, telephones, telegraphs, electricity, automobiles, movies, radios, airplanes. It would be foolish to deny the immense changes wrought by science and technology in the years since 1940, but it is not foolish to emphasize that the changes took place in a settled historical context. C. P. Snow, attempting to describe the infighting among Winston Churchill's science advisers during World War II, searched for a phrase adequate to what he conceived of as the radical novelty of the events he was describing. All he could come up

## To Our Readers

Doris Grumbach replaces Reed Whittemore as literary editor of *The New Republic* as of September 15. Mr. Whittemore wants to thank all those who have contributed to *TNR*'s back pages over the last four years, as well as the magazine's staff, and to wish Mrs. Grumbach good fortune with the books that climb *TNR*'s walls.

Mrs. Grumbach is the author of two novels, a critical study of Mary McCarthy, *The Company She Kept*, and is on extended leave from The College of Saint Rose, Albany, N.Y. More recently she was Visiting University Fellow at Empire State College, State University of New York. She has been a regular contributor to several periodicals, among them *The New Republic*, *America* and *Commonweal*.

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with was—"court politics."

Bell assumes that the impressive changes he points to in the occupational structure transform society and its problems completely; it is equally likely that they simply add on a new layer of problems to the old structure. Bell says post-industrial society is less of a whole than the industrial order it replaces, yet insists that the educated workers in the new service strata are somehow more "central" and "typical" than the almost equal number of industrial workers still standing in the same tableau. This is both inconsistent and unpersuasive.

There is more historical continuity than Bell lets on; there is also a remarkable historical persistence to debates about the future. Bell is the heir of the Progressive intellectuals who watched the birth of a new order and decided, prematurely, that its advent meant the end of individualism and capitalism and the beginning of a new, collectivist America. They looked forward to an inevitable victory of what Bell calls "sociologizing" over economics. Like Bell, the Progressives underestimated the enduring power of profit, and never squarely faced the political questions of power and disparate wealth; they fooled themselves into thinking that historical forces would do the work that only people, acting through politics, can do.

Bell does not have the moral focus to be found in the best work of sociologists like David Riesman or the late C. Wright Mills. I'm not talking politics: Mills and Riesman come to very different, in fact opposite, conclusions about American society, but their work is anchored to a profound moral concern for the fate of the worthy individual in a conformist and bureaucratic society. They have a test for the validity of social institutions—the degree to which they make room for an ideal of fulfilled individuality—and there is a kind of grandeur in their common assertion of liberal, rational, individual values in an illiberal world. Bell has no comparable moral centerweight. His criticisms of the intellectuals of the counterculture and the Left often hit the mark, but the reader is sometimes left with the puzzled impression that Bell really thinks the main problem facing this great, troubled country is its alienated intellectuals. He exalts the political realm and fears democracy. He vigorously and often persuasively defends his ideal of meritocracy, but is less vigorous in pointing out the degree to which American society is not meritocratic and does not honor real merit, and he can scarcely stir himself to acknowledge the unwarranted extremes of inequality in American life. For all his acceptance of the corporate order, he says he favors the new communal goals of the "sociologizing" point of view. Yet he attacks the egalitarian, socialist philosophy of John Rawls, which he thinks is destined to shape the thought of the last part of the 20th century as individualistic liberalism molded the 19th and early 20th centuries. His attempt at rebutting Rawls amounts to a reminder that these matters are all very complex, which is of course true. Socialists have not yet drawn a convincing portrait of human nature; the famous old slogan "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" begs many questions, not the least being the precise definition of abilities and needs. Rawls' conception of justice as fairness leaves out many considerations of incentive, motives and universal values, but in its consistent concern to preserve the best political values of liberal individualism in an inevitably collectivist age, it is surely a better and more appealing starting point for drawing up a new social contract than Bell's position, which is less a position than a set of warnings. There is a lack of balance in Bell's preoccupation with meritocracy that contrasts with Rawls' careful edifice of counterpoised principles. Bell is at his best as a cautionary sage, pointing to real problems and warning the gullible not to take any wooden nickels. The moral vision behind these warnings is truly complex, but the complicated calculations too regularly balance out on the side of complacency and the status quo.

Finally I would add my private disappointment at the remoteness of *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* from the actual social texture of American life. To my mind the best sociology, however abstract and theoretical, renders our social existence more humanly vivid—as Max Weber does when he speaks of the iron cage of rationality descending on the modern world. Bell's

# Bed Time

Few beds are stonier than one shared by a sleeper
and a waker who stares into the dark
listening to the house breathe. Children
sigh, dogs snore, clocks tick, radiators mutter.
Love past, he lies vacant. Bed carries him
to countries that his body will never visit,
regions where his mind cannot drink the water.
Feet up. Blood trickles through his head
to pass between Horn Gate and Ivory Gate.
Sleep pilot, dreamer, flying Dutchman,
he steers his ticktock course between chills and fever
bound out of Birthport for Lovepool and Death Haven.

Love past! Clandestine beds in borrowed apartments.
Fern beds, pine needles, beds for *porcheria.*
Beds whose springs have crumpled from exuberance
or rattled with anger. Beds whose backs have bent
from nightly throes of union and reunion.
*"Oh bed, where first I loosed my virgin girdle . . ."*
*She fell upon her knees and kissed the bed.*

As in a hospital where he awaits in bed
the next day's condescension of doctors,
he bleeds broken promises. Is it sailing time
for the ship of fools, the ship of the dead?
Pain lightning flickers and spatters
the fourcornered flatland of his life,
but what else is there to fall back on?
In bed we depend on nothing but bed.

PETER DAVISON

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assumption of the convergence of the various advanced industrial societies is characteristically ahistorical, and testifies to his indifference to the thousands of persistent cultural traits, values, traditions and tics that make, say, Japan so different from France or America, no matter how contemporary the setting. His essential lack of curiosity about these matters, together with his lukewarm interest in social psychology, social types, and social character make this book read like the work of a learned Martian. Some people once imagined that sociologists might replace novelists as explorers of the human complexities of the age. To judge by this monumental chilly work they were quite wrong.

**Joseph Featherstone**

# Swallowing America Whole

## The Fourteenth Chronicle

by John Dos Passos
ed. by Townsend Ludington
(Gambit; $12.50 until Dec. 31, $15 thereafter)

*"America our nation has been beaten by strangers who have turned our language inside out who have taken the clean words our fathers spoke and made them slimy and foul . . . we stand defeated America."*

One of time's ironies is that these passages from Camera Eye (50) in *The Big Money* are probably John Dos Passos' most remembered words; and yet, given to students today, they would likely be identified as belonging to Allen Ginsberg's "America" poem. Triggered by the Sacco-Vanzetti execution, they represent the furthest left position in Dos Passos' political thinking; his arrival at that point and his consequent turn to the right are movingly documented in *The Fourteenth Chronicle*, a large (643 pages) collection of Dos Passos' letters and diary entries covering 60 years, 1910-1970.

The comparison with Ginsberg is not gratuitous, though the elder Dos Passos would have disliked it. Dos Passos was in many ways a poet manqué (his diary is filled with poems) and his early letters, which compose the bulk of *The Fourteenth Chronicle*, often read remarkably like the travel poems in Ginsberg's *The Fall of America:* sharp descriptions of the sounds, sights, smells and tastes encountered on Dos Passos' endless wanderings through Europe, Asia, Africa and, finally, America. This book shows him to be in that main American tradition beginning with Whitman that seeks to grasp the American experience by accumulation of detail, by great width and scope, by swallowing America whole, as it were, rather than carving out deep chunks from certain sections as his friends Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner and Cummings did.

Two reasons for Dos Passos' lack of popular success (compared to, say, Hemingway and Fitzgerald) are the negative thrust of his work—he always insisted his writing was satirical—and his failure to create characters with whom readers could identify either themselves or the author. He never became a personality like his friends and in the endless stream of anecdote about the "lost generation" writers, Dos Passos was always the one who was listening while Cummings regaled the company with his wit and musical improvisations or who watched while Hemingway battled the huge marlin and the sharks that were made famous in *The Old Man and the Sea*. My favorite picture of Dos Passos is in Carlos Baker's *Ernest Hemingway*, where Dos Passos looks like the poor squire to the resplendently ski-clad Hemingway and Gerald Murphy.

*The Fourteenth Chronicle* should be

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in fleshing out Dos Passos for his readers. And while the book is ultimately sad, with the elderly out-of-step writer exclaiming that "the rank idiocy of the younger generation is more than I can swallow" (echoing a letter of his father's 56 years earlier), the main impression one gets from reading it is that of a decent and generous man of boundless enthusiasm and energy; if a satirist is a romantic with 20/20 vision, Dos Passos fits the description.

His writing reflects a natural blend of theory with personality; personally modest and shy, he replaced Whitman's cosmic and Ginsberg's orgasmic "I" with his "Camera Eye," the main stylistic influences being Flaubert, Joyce, Eisenstein and Hemingway. Dos Passos' multiple-protagonist novels in turn became very influential, leading to Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* and the wave of New Journalists. But where the latter tend to be marked by self-indulgence or self-display, Dos Passos' style retains its basic objectivity and intelligence, even in his later works.

*The Fourteenth Chronicle* is arranged chronologically, diary and letters interspersed and supported by a continuing and useful biography, written in a style sometimes too close to Dos Passos' schoolboy enthusiasms by editor Townsend Ludington. There are two main sequences of letters: in the first half to his young friend Rumsey Marvin, taking us through his school days, his travels, his beginnings as a writer; in the second half to Edmund Wilson, showing us the painstaking evolution of Dos Passos' political ideas. There are also many letters to the famous, the near-famous and the unknown, including some very touching ones to his first wife Katy, killed in a tragic car accident in 1947.

This collection is not very literary, but it *is* literature. There is little about his own writing except how hard it is to do. Dos Passos was congenitally allergic to abstract formulae—he had the poet's distrust of words—and the letters deal with events, adventures, battles with censors, his long fight against rheumatic fever, impressions of cities, reports of friends, etc. Whenever he lectures or makes some general statement about life, literature or politics, he invariably tacks on some disclaimer, notably "This is all bullshit!" The letters show over and over that he was attached to people, not dogma or schools or slogans; he constantly refused to join the Communist Party even while he saw it as the hope for the future. Just as his left turn, and much of his early writing, was focused by Sacco-Vanzetti, his turn to the right was incurred in large part by the Communist assassination of Dos Passos' Spanish friend José Robles in 1936. (This event, fictionalized in *Adventures of a Young Man*, 1939, also ended his close friendship with Hemingway; Dos Passos could remain friends despite ideological differences, but Hemingway couldn't.)

Dos Passos also fell out with Malcolm Cowley and *The New Republic* over a friend, Spanish artist Luis Quintanilla. *TNR* had published Dos Passos' first professional writing back in 1916, and his association with this magazine remained close until 1934, when Cowley printed a letter concerning Quintanilla without Dos Passos' permission. Dos Passos felt the letter would hurt rather than help Quintanilla, who was then in a Spanish jail, and from then on he referred to *TNR* as "Neuro" and other epithets, despite keeping his friendship with Cowley and Edmund Wilson.

All along Dos Passos insists that he has *not* changed his stance, that he has always fought for the "individual's rights," for the worker, against Big Business *(USA)*, Big Government *(District of Columbia)*, Big Labor *(Midcentury)*. His strong stand against Russia reflects his belief not that capitalism is good, but that it's better than communism. One of his letters about the oppressiveness of Russia, which he visited in 1928, reads remarkably like a recently published letter by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. In fact many of Dos Passos' letters (the artist as prophet) have a distinctly contemporary sound: "Our presidents have been getting to be synthetic monsters, the work of a hundred ghostwriters and press agents so that it is getting harder & harder to discover the line between the man and the institution" (to Edmund Wilson, 1951) and "For God's sake, Rummy boy, put this in your pipe and smoke it—everything said & written & thought in America about the war is lies—God! They choke one like poison gas—" (to Rumsey Marvin, 1917). The few letters that actually *are* contemporary, written shortly before his death in 1970, sound like a more generous, lower-keyed William Buckley (in fact the last letter in the book is a recommendation that Buckley be admitted to the Century Association). Here are excerpts from a 1970 letter to his daughter Lucy, then a college student:

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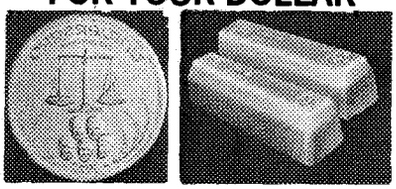

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orientals, Mexicans etc. so much more amusing than the poor pale-faced WASPs is that they didn't spend those countless hours staring at TV. They learned to play as children. The abuse of narcotics stems in part from an effort to get back into the old TV coma. Woodstock is worth seeing. I'd like to know how it hits you. To me it was endlessly depressing. Sociologically interesting, yes. . . . All these half naked people, young and not so young rejoicing in the fact that there were two hundred thousand of them there. At any time in my life if I'd taken a young lady out to the Catskills, I'd have wanted a little privacy.

Anyone interested in the various shifts of American political thinking in the last 40 years will enjoy the second half of *The Fourteenth Chronicle*. But more moving to me is the first half, a portrait of the young artist going out in the world, his gradual maturing, his war experiences, his first literary "successes." It is here that Dos Passos becomes visible as a person, despite what he calls his "famous shell." No novel could catch so well as these letters, beginning in 1910 when Dos Passos was 14, the emergence of a youthful writer. I particularly like, in these inflationary times, a 1911 diary entry:

> Cash Account
> April 5 . . . . . on hand $.04
> April 5 . . . . . Stamps .04
> Total 0
> Bankrupt Again!

Dos Passos early read Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey*, a book from which he apparently never recovered: youthful wanderlust, particularly long walking trips, is delightfully, minutely described. The earlier letters to Rumsey Marvin, an even younger friend, are in the tone of an English schoolboy to a precocious and beloved child (or maybe Alice to her cat), filled with Os and darns and gollys; they progress to the immemorial cry of youth:

> I want to swallow the oyster of the world. I want to peel the rind of the orange. I want to drink the cup to the dregs—no—I want to swallow it and still have it to look at. I want to peel off the rind in patterns of my own making. I want to paint with the dregs pictures of gods and demons on the great white curtains of eternity. (1918)

Dos Passos is refreshingly reticent about his own sexual life, but is far from prudish, and his thirst for experience covers both high and low. His descriptions of the war are harrowing in their physicalness; working with a volunteer ambulance group, he sometimes had the job of carrying out in buckets amputated arms and legs: "The grey crooked fingers of the dead, the dark look of dirty mangled bodies, their groans and joltings in the ambulances, the vast tom-toms of the guns, the ripping tear shells make when they explode, the song of shells outgoing, like vast woodcocks. . . ."

One feels growing in Dos Passos a clear intellect, a sympathy with the downtrodden that is not sentimental, an integrity that is not dogmatic, a belief in hard work without self-pity. "To think clearly & piteously, to love without stint, to feel in ones veins the throbbing of all the life of all the world—is that not better than to succeed and to be tapped on tap day and to make Phi Beta Kappa and grow a paunch on the income from slave labor?" (1919)

One jarring note: in his few references to blacks they are invariably called "coons" or "niggers." His attitude toward Jews also seems to partake of that

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ALBERT SCHWARTZ *is assistant professor on the development faculty of Empire State College, State University of New York.* PETER MEINKE *is a poet who teaches at Eckerd College, Florida.* SAUL MALOFF's *novel,* Heartland, *will be published by Scribner's this month.*

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particular blindness that affected almost all our major writers of the time. Nor do homosexuals escape. The letters are disturbing here, but then, Thomas Jefferson's letters are disturbing in the same way. Could we be progressing as a civilization? Well, . . .

At any rate I think that Dos Passos succeeded in writing several "permanent" books (*Three Soldiers*, the USA trilogy, *Manhattan Transfer)* and that much of his other writing is greatly underestimated. I hope that this important book will send readers back to Dos Passos.

**Peter Meinke**

# Consistent Performer

## American Review 18

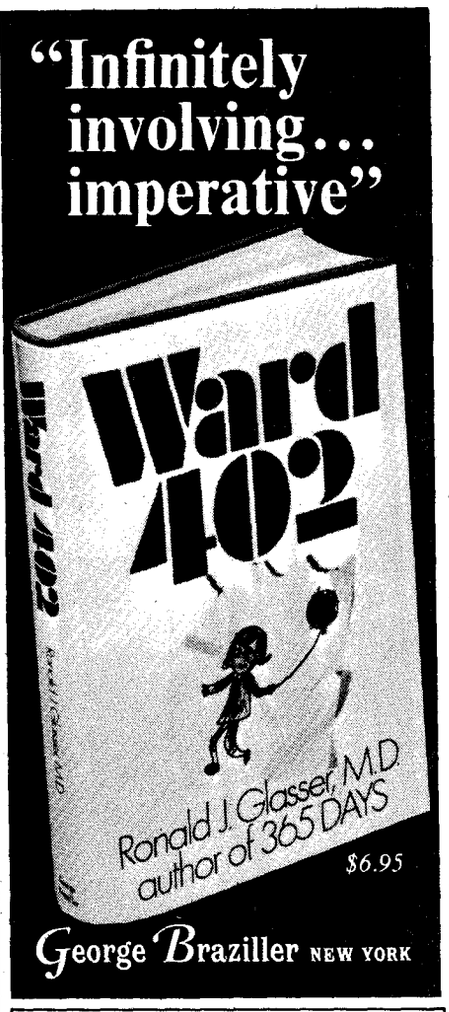
### edited by Theodore Solotaroff

(Bantam Books; $1.95)

In the half dozen years of its life Theodore Solotaroff's *American Review* (formerly *New American Review)* has steadfastly borne the stamp of his high seriousness, imagination, enterprise, venturesomeness. None of these is necessary, of course, to publish writers of the caliber of Philip Roth, Günther Grass, Brian Moore, Susan Sontag (to pluck out of the thick air a few obvious instances), but Solotaroff and Richard Howard, the poetry editor (and in his own right a notable poet, critic, translator), are in earnest when they call the *Review* a "magazine of new writing," by which, thank heaven, they do not mean a theory-ridden or precious, self-conscious, hot pursuit of the "new," not to say "avant garde," if indeed ither term can be used these days with straight face. "New writing" has all long meant that which strikes the serious and civilized literary intelligence s vital, fresh, energetic, "contemporary"—as, simply put, worth the attention of a serious reader suffering vertigo t the brink of glut and in danger of eing pitched over by currents of print, ho wants to know why he should other ever to read anything again in is life. There has never been an issue f the *Review* that hasn't been worth ie attention of that battered, sore-flicted, mean-spirited reader; and that saying a very great deal for any literary quarterly. (The term is generic; in ct this one is published thrice yearly the form of a paperback book.)

hat said, one should note one's little vils. From time to time the editorial introductions, though always shrewd, have tended toward solemnity or succumbed to an amiable weakness for making grave pronouncements about the human condition and the state of the culture: white papers almost. The failing is understandable; Solotaroff has seen the magazine, rightly, as an ongoing recorder of the vital impulses in contemporary letters, and has felt an urgent need to seek out general principles and tendencies. But more admirable has been the steady flow, issue after issue, of work that is worth preserving and—under the protective cover of major writers—young writers who are worth encouraging. Each issue has been distinguished by an astonishing consistency of balance, tact, variousness, quality.

Inevitably one quarrels also with particular pieces—a story here, a poem there, some essay: who can resist the evil pleasure of up-editing the editor? In the current number that finely gifted young writer Leonard Michaels is not especially well represented; and in an interesting and moving piece Michael Rossman is sometimes excessive and breathes too heavily. But on the whole the issue is rich in surprise and pleasure: Susan Sontag's sly evocation of the corrosions, the little deaths and perverse binding-force of New York; an affecting, compassionate memoir by Stanley Kauffmann of a young man's first encounters with rotting flesh, mortal disease, the depradations of age, death; fine fiction from a young English writer, Ian McEwan, and other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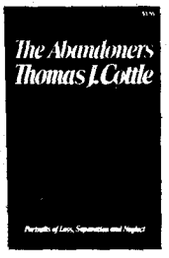


Ashley Montagu chose these words to summarize his feelings about Thomas J. Cottle's probing examination of what it means to lose someone — to death, to ideology, to indifference, to another person. Or, as Theodore Solotaroff put it: "Cottle knows the difference between facing a problem and facing a face." Now available in paperback at $2.95

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young writers; fine verse from Irving Feldman and other poets—in fact to pay adequate tribute to the number is to list the table of contents.

Perhaps special note must be made of two major contributions: Günther Grass' "On Stasis in Progress," a section of his forthcoming *From the Diary of a Snail;* and "Marriage à la Mode," a section of Philip Roth's novel-in-progress. The Grass piece is a free-form essay in contemporary political consciousness, an attempt to convey a state of mind and spirit as it moves across a landscape of the burned-out utopian hopes of the late '60s, meditations on the dialectic of exhilaration and melancholy (the "occasion" for the meditation is the Dürer engraving *Melencolia I*), the sense of aftermath, of resignation (though not defeat or passivity), the resolute settling for small victories that may be won, not by any romantic coup de théâtre, but through the unrelenting grind of day-to-day socialist politics. It is a marvelous piece, a triumph of mind and spirit: acerbic, subtle, witty, deep-running.

Roth is our best novelist of manners at the bloody edges of experience, and our leading diagnostician-clinician of bad marriages. He's got himself a murderously bad one here: this sampling is boisterous, funny, painful, at once frenzied and beautifully controlled and paced. Bad marriage is one of the great animating subjects in the history of the novel. What's bad for growing things is good for literature. In recent decades it may have seemed an American invention, but that appearance merely testifies to its depth and pervasiveness. Yet since we did in fact (if one be permitted a small liberty) discover the union of souls as a bum rap, and its devastating wreckage as secular hell, it *is* as American as stalking terror. From the look of this sample Roth, who possesses all the resources in ample measure, may well be on his way to laying proprietary claim to territory he prospected and staked out in earlier work, including that uncommonly fine (and unjustly regarded) novel *When She Was Good.*

Each contribution—the Grass and the Roth—could by itself carry any number of any literary magazine anywhere; together they can float a battleship. When you add to them the numerous delightful and edifying things that make up the *American Review 18*, you have another striking instance of what has been throughout its career the best, most balanced and consistent performer among our literary periodicals. And that's why a mere issue is worth noticing—to call attention and pay tribute.

**Saul Maloff**

# Correspondence

## Apologia for Freedom

*Sirs:*

A footnote to Melville J. Ulmer's "A Socialism of Sorts" (*TNR*, Aug. 18 & 25, 1973) is called for. Since I have some personal knowledge of the situation of my philosophic colleagues in Belgrade, I must question the rather uncritical way in which Mr. Ulmer dismisses the ". . . numerous demotions and scores of arrests . . ." in Yugoslavia in recent months. In our anxiety to avoid a stupid anti-communism, we should not fall into the trap of blind apologia. The marshal and his government indeed have not acted with "Stalin-style ruthlessness," but they are violating the civil liberties and intellectual freedoms of some of the country's (and the world's) leading Marxist thinkers.

At a meeting of the University Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (Belgrade, October 9, 1972) it was recommended that eight outstanding philosophers at the University of Belgrade should not be allowed to continue to teach for political reasons, *viz:* because they had published articles in which they expounded views incompatible with the "policy and ideology" of the league. Following the October 9th meeting, the laws of December 1972 were adopted implementing the resolutions of the meeting and which subordinate educational policy to "security" questions. Fortunately academic tradition and courage have thus far partially protected these eight teachers from the full force of the league's action. Nevertheless publication of philosophic journals (e.g. *Praxis)* has been suspended, passports restricted or withdrawn and writings censored or suppressed.

*Howard B. Radest*
*Fair Lawn, NJ*

**COMING**

Sidney Hook reviews
a biography of John Reed,
*So Short a Time*

## Psychology Lesson

*Sirs:*

As one generally in sympathy with the thinking of TRB I am puzzled by his piece, "The Fatal Flaw," (*TNR*, September 8, 1973).

We are all aware that impeachment "is in the Constitution," and TRB nowhere claims that it "can't" work, but only that it "won't" work. Why? Because of a general "reluctance" so great that to even mention impeachment "is almost a taunt." TRB says that after 200 years of checks and balances "we discover that our rigid system has no fire escape." But he has already acknowledged the presence of the fire escape, and the public refusal to make use of that safety device does not negate its existence.

It strikes me that the "flaw" is not in the Constitution but in the psychology of the American public, who—whether from a positive wish for absolute rule, or from the negative unwillingness to admit their mistake at the polls—are tacitly supporting Mr. Nixon in his monarchical "misconception of his office."

If indeed "impeachment is too much like executing Charles I" the flaw is certainly psychological, and promises to be really "fatal" to our democracy if Mr. Nixon's widely shared misconception cannot be tested and corrected now

*R. P. Harnden*
*Plymouth, Mass.*

## Mandate in 1972?

*Sirs:*

In his August 15 Watergate speech Mr Nixon was, as he has been from th start of this sorry episode, unconvinc ing. As he has since last Novembe he stressed again his belief that he i governing by mandate. . . .

An examination of the election result does not, it seems, support his "man date" notion. Mr. Nixon's popular vot was 39.3 million (61 percent) againe Mr. McGovern's 23.7 million (37 pe cent). But if as reported only 55 percer of eligible voters bothered to vote 52. million did not vote for any candidat Added to Mr. McGovern's 37 percer and other candidates' less than 2 pe cent that 52.3 million comes to 66 pe cent of the electorate who did not vo for Mr. Nixon. While we can assur that many of the "stay-at-home would have voted for Mr. Nixon ha they gone to the polls, we have no w

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of knowing how many. Nor can we discount the negative effect of those voting, *i.e.*, the number of voters who cast votes for Nixon who were in fact casting their votes against McGovern.

Other evidence against Mr. Nixon's claim of a mandate appears in the congressional and gubernatorial results. 59.3 percent of senators elected were Democrats as against 40.7 percent Republicans. To the House 56 percent Democrats were elected versus 44 percent Republicans. In fact Mr. Nixon was the first President elected in 120 years who did not carry with him at least one house of Congress. 61 percent of those elected to state houses were Democrats; 39 percent were Republicans. Mandate?

Considering the disclosures of the tactics used by Mr. Nixon's "overzealous" supporters to assure his election, the wonder is that his majority was not greater! (Incidentally the "overzealous" seemed like carbon copies of the "old Nixon" who ran against Jerry Voorhis, Helen Gahagan Douglas and Edmund "Pat" Brown in elections marked by equally questionable tactics.)

*George F. Harrington*
*San Diego, Calif.*

## Scrambled Facts

*Sirs:*

It would be hard to pack more mistakes into one phrase than your reviewer did in speaking of Frieda Lawrence's sister in your last issue. He says she left her professor husband, Otto Gross, for Max Weber. But in fact she did not leave her husband for Max Weber, she did not leave her husband, she was not married to Otto Gross, and Otto Gross was not a professor. One really must be a bit more careful than that.

*Martin Green*
*Medford, Mass.*

*In reply:*

It's obvious that I didn't read—or proofread—my Lawrence piece very carefully before I dashed off to Hawaii! Your correspondent is correct. For Max Weber read Alfred Weber. For Otto Gross read Edgar Jaffe. My apologies to Martin Green and *TNR*. It's trivial in the context of the review-essay, but I should have been right, not rapid.

*Stanley Weintraub*

## Kauffmann, *from page 22*

nowhere, not very fast; still some things are extraordinary. First, it's the best mixture of animation and live photography that I've seen—the *only* one I've seen that had some point. Second, which *is* the point, the texture, taking us from the real into the distorted real, makes it all a metropolitan *Walpurgisnacht*. Bakshi hasn't completely avoided tenement-poetry clichés, like the sensitivity of the hero and the hearts of gold in some derelicts he encounters, but in the main, and in the mainline, this is hell. Done with brio and pezazz, peopled with cartoons, but still hell. Which is just how one feels at times in New York and other big cities.

Several times a year the French Film Office in New York sends out big glossy portfolios of illustrated sheets about forthcoming French pictures. A generally depressing experience. You can't believe, as you leaf through the sheets and read the synopses, that most of these pictures are actually going to be made. In fact, they have already been made, and unfortunately some of them get shown here.

Like two recent disasters. *Le Sex Shop* (Peppercorn-Wormser) is by Claude Berri, the syrup merchant who made *The Two of Us*. Berri is in this one himself, as a young Paris bookseller with a wife and two children, whose shop does poorly and who goes into the porno business. As a result of the new ambience, he and his wife feel obligated to try sexual adventure—or rather to try to try. In the most sickening Hollywood '30s tradition, there is a lot of teasing but no sin.

This is what I would call a dirty film, providing some sex titillation on the way out from and back to Comfyland. Porno films are porno films; you can go or not go (for a while anyway!). *Le Sex Shop* is fake porno from a bus-tour window, so you can feel sexy and safe at the same time. France *must* be becoming Americanized.

The second dud is *The Tall Blond Man with One Black Shoe* (Cinema V). It starts as a slightly clumsy but possibly amusing spoof on professional spies and spying professionalism. One official of the French secret service sets a booby-trap for another, because the latter apparently is making moves toward the former's job. The procedures and formalities of surveillance lend themselves to a kind of film ballet reminiscent of René Clair—for a time. But the picture fizzles early. The hero-victim, the bait of the booby-trap, is played by Pierre Richard (new to me), who has neither the charm nor the comedic resource to make the man interesting; and the plot soon degenerates from spoof into stupidity. Richard is an orchestral violinist and more or less behaves like one until he goes to play in a concert where sense—comic sense—is thrown out the window for laughs, which of course we don't get anyway. The picture never recovers, never seriously-comically tries to. A small pity. The subject is worth spoofing, and the spoof begins moderately well; but the picture soon becomes offensively gaggy.

To fail in an attempt (like Tanner in his latest) is one matter. To make pictures like these two French things, moronically inept and essentially craven, is another. People like Berri and Yves Robert, who directed and co-wrote the spy film, ought to be liable to public revenge. Perhaps they could be hung by the thumbs for a period equivalent to the running time of their films. Well, maybe that's too cruel. Just by one thumb then.

## Personals

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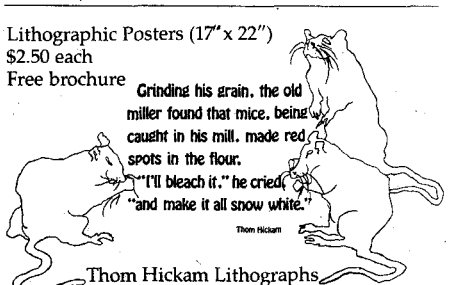
Grinding his grain, the old miller found that mice, being caught in his mill, made red spots in the flour.
"I'll bleach it," he cried, "and make it all snow white."
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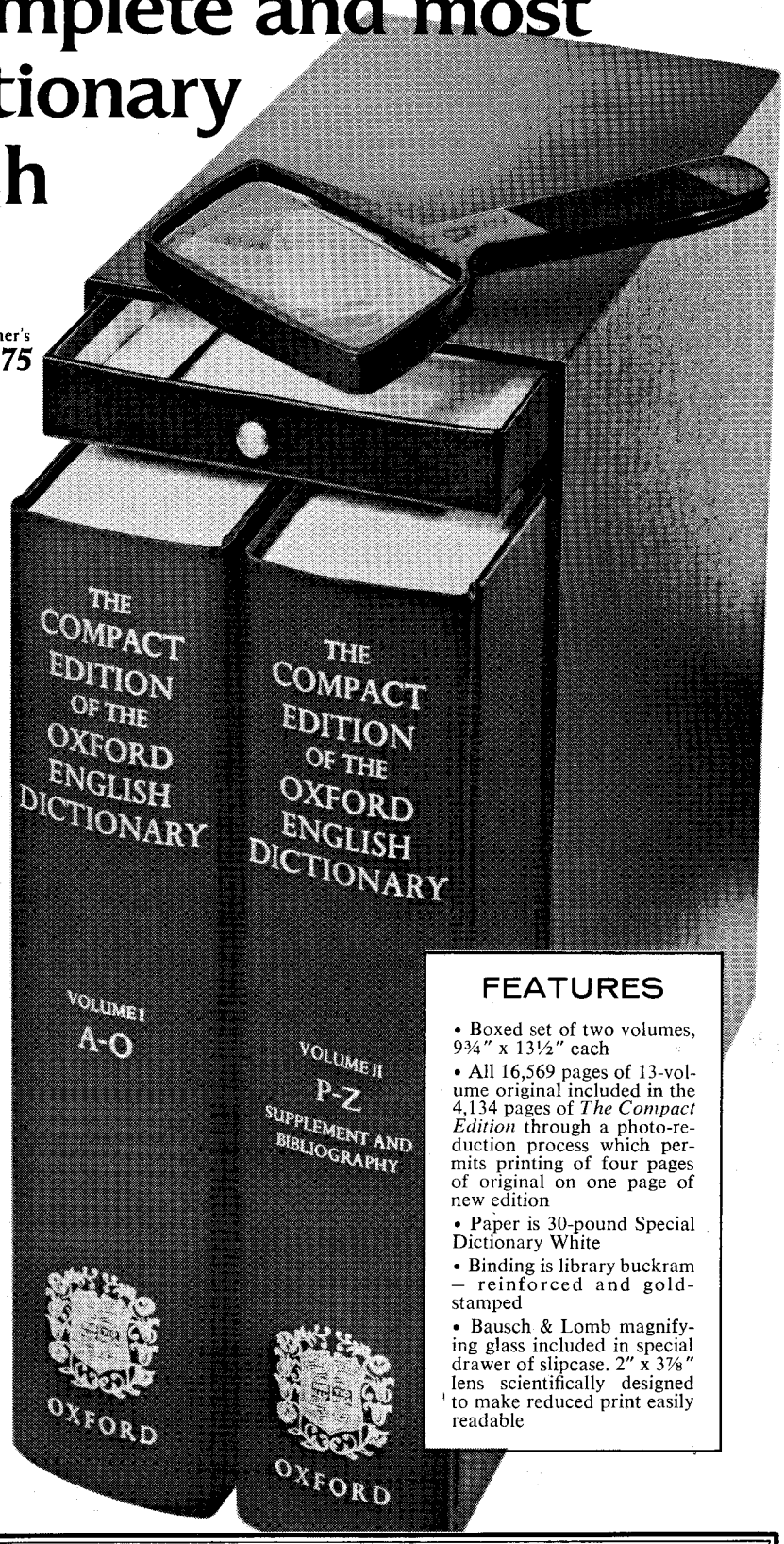
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